





Contents





38

The Power of Austin

Live music mecca, honky-tonk watering hole, bohemian startup city—the Texas capital has no limits.

BY DAVID WHITLEY PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN WESTERGREN

58

101 Reasons to Travel Now

Why get up and go? Let us count the ways, from can't-miss festivals to Instagramworthy eats.

BY AMY ALIPIO AND JENNIFER BARGER

La Vida Local in Costa Rica

A New York City family takes a vacation from its routines in coastal. calm Mal Pais.

BY JOHANNA BERKMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTA ROSSOW

82

New Jersey's Garden Variety

The author veers off the highway in her home state to find farm stands, forests, and night stars.

BY JENNA SCHNUER PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN KERNICK

BECAUSE SOMEDAY

I want to capture fish who are trying to capture me.







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PUBLICIST Heather Wyatt

ngtraveler@hwyattpr.com; 212-610-5535

MARKET RESEARCH MANAGER Tracy Hamilton Stone

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PUBLISHER & VICE PRESIDENT

ADVERTISING NORTH AMERICA SALES OFFICES 161 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10013; 212-610-5500, Fax: 212-741-0463

NEW YORK BRAND MANAGERS

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MAGAZINE PUBLISHING ADMINISTRATION
1145 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-4688

BUSINESS & FINANCE MAGAZINE PUBLISHING
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DIRECTOR, INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE PUBLISHING

Ariel Deiaco-Lohr adeiacol@ngs.org

HEADQUARTERS

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Notebook

A JOURNAL FOR THE SMART TRAVELER





The Okavango Delta has been declared the 1000th UNESCO World Heritage site









CHECKING IN

THE LURE OF THE GRAND HOTEL

ownton Abbey fans may soon abandon their Anglophilia and fall in love with fin de siècle New York. Downton creator Julian Fellowes is penning a miniseries set during the late 19th century, when money multiplied in the hands of American industrialists and the wealthy embraced travel. The hotel boom that resulted originated in New York City, with the Astors feuding to outdo one another. Thanks to preservation efforts at grande dame hotels, you can experience the glamour of their heyday, albeit with 21st-century comfort. Choose from the Knickerbocker (John Jacob Astor IV), St. Regis (same Astor), Plaza, and Peninsula (formerly Gotham) hotels. Mark Twain's disdain for the pageantry of the period may have labeled the Gilded Age. But with their endurance, these original "ladies" have the last word. – JEAN NEWMAN GLOCK

New York City's elegant style (clockwise from top): doorknob from the Plaza, Waldorf-Astoria lobby, room at the St. Regis



OM SIBLEY/AGEFOTOSTOCK (KNOB), ALEX SEGRE/ALAMY (LOBBY), THE ST. REGIS NEW YORK (CHAISE LO

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GÖBEKLİ TEPE

Some prehistoric cultures worshipped celestial objects while others idolized animals. The reason why man started to worship at all is still a mystery, but the where and the when have finally been answered. It all began in Göbekli Tepe, the 12,000 year-old temple that altered our understanding of civilization, Discover Turkey, home of Göbekli Tepe.

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HOMEOF C* COBEKLITEPE



It's here, among our millions of acres, that you can find experiences and adventures that are distinctly Montana. Within our boundaries are wonders like Glacier National Park, the jagged peaks of the Mission Mountains, the teal-colored waters of the Middle Fork of the Flathead River and the expansive backcountry of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. There is plenty of charm in our eclectic cities and small communities.

IT'S TIME TO EXPLORE WESTERN MONTANA'S GLACIER COUNTRY

Visitors will find **Missoula** filled with an endless array of arts and entertainment including galleries, museums, a vibrant music scene, dance and theatre. For the outdoor enthusiast, Missoula offers world-class kayaking, fly-fishing, stand up paddle boarding, river surfing, rafting and tubing – all in the heart of downtown. And you'll discover plenty of culinary experiences to end your day. From locally sourced, epicurean delights to a budding food truck culture, there truly is something for everyone. Sample the abundance of handcrafted beers at eight local breweries, award-winning wine at two wineries or spirited cocktails at three unique distilleries. | destinationmissoula.com

Whitefish offers a stunning backdrop as the western larch trees change from green to gold. Visitors can experience breathtaking scenery while hiking and mountain biking on the Whitefish Trail during the seasonal transition. After a stimulating outdoor adventure, you'll enjoy connecting with local artisans as you stroll downtown browsing the exquisite and varied galleries and local shops. There is plenty of opportunity to continue the celebration at the diverse local eateries, many offering farm-to-table meals featuring the season's harvest. | explorewhitefish.com

Left to right:
Fun in the water at Brennan's Wave
in Missoula. Hiking near Whitefish in
Glacier National Park. Crowds gather at
Caras Park in Missoula for live music.
Kayaking Bowman Lake near Whitefish.



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SHOP

STOCKED WITH NOSTALGIA

America's general stores find strength in their past.

hen people walk in the door, their pace always seems to slow," says Sheri Moretz, official historian of the original, 132-year-old Mast General Store in tiny Valle Crucis, North Carolina. Tucked in rural hamlets and along country roads, the American general store was a central part of daily life long before the arrival of the automobile. Farmers and locals gathered to load up on dry goods and share news with neighbors. Today, people wander the worn wood floors in search of timeless souvenirs.

Some of these Americana institutions have turned into post offices and museums listed on the National Register of Historic Places, while others entice patrons by adding bakeries, delis, and live music. Texas's Gruene General Store lures visitors with its Norman Rockwell-style soda fountain, five-cent coffee, and penny candy. Good Hart in northern Michigan ships homemade pot pies, complete with a heart-shaped vent cut out in the middle. M. Crow & Co. in Lostine, Oregon, features handcrafted items—from cutting boards to "marshmallow and weenie sticks"—and an experimental brewery.

But local jams and rock candy aside, the best part of general stores may be the sense of community they create. "People sit and talk to each other, kids play outside, and the morning coffee hour solves the world's problems," says Good Hart owner Carolyn Sutherland. "We like to think we're the original social network." —SUSAN O'KEEFE

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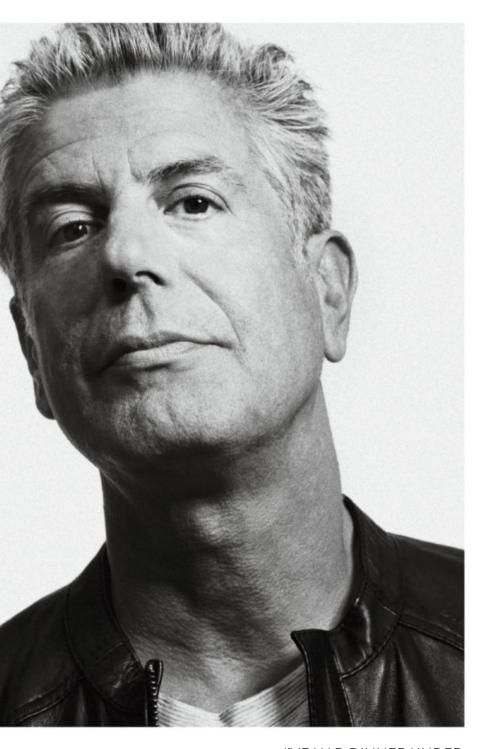
First place winner at 17th annual gourmand cookbook award for "Best Health and Nutrition Book" in the world











I'VE HAD DINNER UNDER A BOUQUET OF HUMAN SKULLS; I GUESS THAT WAS PRETTY STRANGE.

EXPLORER

Mr. Iron Stomach

Anthony Bourdain is ready for his next course.

elevision host, author, and former executive chef Anthony Bourdain has licked his plate clean all over the world, from soup dumplings in Shanghai to piranhas in Peru. The New York City native's CNN show, Parts Unknown, headed to locales such as South Korea, Madagascar, and Scotland during its fifth season this year. Bourdain's busy in his hometown, too: He plans to open an Asian-style hawker market in Manhattan early next year.

WHAT'S THE WORLD'S MOST UNDERRATED SPOT?

Montevideo, in Uruguay, which is to a great extent undiscovered. Everyone from Argentina knows how cool it is because they fill the place up during the season, but other than them, the rest of the world has yet to catch on. It's a very laid-back place, the people are really nice, the beaches are incredible, and there's great food. Tough country for vegetarians, though.

WHICH CITY HAS IT ALL? Tokyo. I mean, if I had to die mid-meal anywhere, it would be Tokyo. If you were to ask most chefs if they had to have house arrest for the rest of their life in one city and eat all of their meals there, just about everyone I know would pick Tokyo.

TRAVELING FOR WORK CHANGE THE WAY YOU TRAVEL FOR VACATION? Yes, very much. I tend to stay put for vacation. If my family's taking a lengthy trip, it's on a Long Island beach, and I'm driving there and I'm not moving. I'm letting my seven-year-old daughter make all of the major decisions about what we're doing. You know, are we going to the beach today or not? Are we having hamburgers or hot dogs? I'm as close to a vegetable as I could be.—HANNAH SHEINBERG

FOR MORE OF ANTHONY BOURDAIN'S INTERVIEW, VISIT
INTELLIGENTTRAYEL.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM.











GOODS THE BATIK



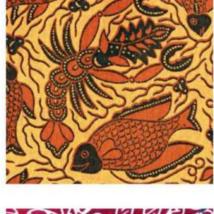
nation. "It's made and used in almost every part of the country," says Benny Gratha, a curator at the Museum Tekstil Jakarta. "It's a symbol of our identity." Visible in everyday clothing as well as in pillowcases and iPad covers, the textile technique uses a painstaking wax-dyeing process; artists dot designs by hand or use a copper stamp. National Batik Day (October 2) marks this UNESCO-listed art form with festivals and exhibitions in Jakarta, Surakarta, Yogyakarta, and

Pekalongan. - GEORGE W. STONE

















PLAY

HOT AND COLD IN MINNEAPOLIS

There's plenty to do in this Twin City, no matter the forecast.



The sculpture garden at the Walker Art Center. Top, a family cools down on Lake Harriet.

his month, sustainability experts come together to brainstorm ideas to combat global warming during MN2015, an international summit held in Minneapolis, Minnesota—a place long famous for its extreme climate. Here are some of the best ways to hurry up and embrace the Midwestern city's soupy summers and snow-globe-style winters—while we still have seasons.

SUMMER Bring a picnic to Lake Harriet's band shell, which hosts concerts-jazz, alt-country, big band, you name it-on most summer days, and movies just after sunset on weekends. For prime people-watching and oysters on the half shell, head to Sea Salt Eatery in Minneapolis's 167-acre Minnehaha Park, home to the 53-foot Minnehaha Falls. In Minneapolis's sister city of St. Paul, located right across the Mississippi River, you don't have to be a baseball fan to appreciate the indie-league St. Paul Saints' new \$63 million CHS Field. With views of the city skyline, local food and beer, and occasional appearances by co-owner Bill Murray, the stadium can feel more like a block party than a baseball game.

WINTER Lace up a pair of rentals and glide under the metal beams of the Depot Ice Rink, a century-old former train shed and registered national historic landmark. Its walls are made of glass, so skaters can enjoy the snow falling over Minneapolis sans negative-degree windchills. If you can handle freezing temperatures, the St. Paul Winter Carnival features outdoor events such as a half-marathon, ice sculpture contests, beer tastings, and the nighttime Torchlight Parade. Escape winter for an afternoon to wander indoors at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, one of the most visited contemporary art museums in the country, which celebrates its 75th birthday this year. - BERIT THORKELSON

eye_oeye

Durban



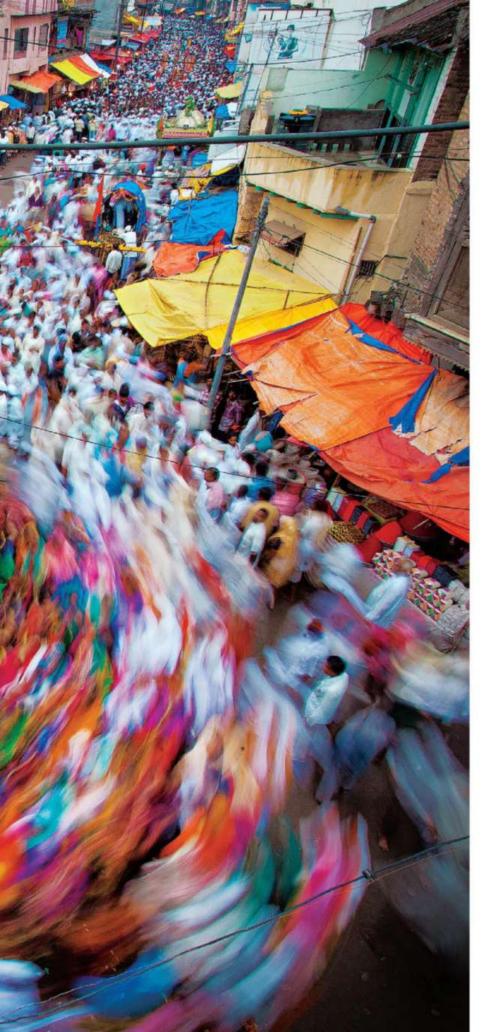


Every time I take a flight, I am always mindful of the many people who make a successful journey possible. Chief Albert Luthuli, Zulu Tribal Chief



1936-1967 (Durban)





YOUR SHOT

Color in Motion

A pilgrimage in India inspires a prismatic image.

indu pilgrims form a swirl of color in the streets of Pandharpur during a yatra, or religious procession. "Every year, thousands of devotees walk dozens of miles to this Indian holy town southeast of Mumbai to pay homage to the deity Vithoba, a regional incarnation of the god Vishnu," says Arvind Ramteke, a photographer based in Mumbai. "Here they flow around a shrine dedicated to the god Hanuman, who often is portrayed as a blue monkey, on their way through town to the Vithoba Temple, where they will honor representations of Vithoba and other deities."

"A number of things grabbed me in this image," says *Traveler* director of photography Dan Westergren, "including the vivid hues and sense of motion. The blurring makes the pilgrims look like a river of people, their colorful attire echoed by the yellow, orange, and blue shop awnings. Caught in the whirlpool of humanity is the small temple, its rooftop statues of sacred blue monkeys appearing to monitor the procession."

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BOOKSHELF

Travel-Ready Reads

New books take us from the Deep South to the Middle East.

PAUL THEROUX Profe South

DEEP SOUTH By Paul Theroux Driving along rural roads, past cotton fields and boarded-up towns, stopping at diners and booming blues fests, Theroux brings his penetrating eye to the American South. Steve McCurry's haunting and hopeful photos (including the one above) accompany the text.

ONE WILD SONG *By Paul Heiney* After his son commits suicide at age 23, Heiney sets off on a sea voyage his sailor son would have loved, solo from England to

the treacherous waters of Cape Horn. The wilds of ocean, island, and glacier offer danger and wonder on this 18,000-mile pilgrimage.

THE DIAMOND CAPER *By Peter Mayle* Daring jewel heists propel the plot in this signature celebration of rosé, renovation, and the sensual splendors of sunny Provence.

THE BAMBOO STALK By Saud Alsanousi In this rare Kuwaiti novel translated into English, a half-Filipino, half-Kuwaiti outcast navigates Kuwait's intricate hierarchies and strictures in his search for acceptance. —DON GEORGE

FOR MORE BOOK REVIEWS, VISIT INTELLIGENTTRAVEL.NATIONALGEOGRAPHIC.COM.

BACKSTORY

THE NEON JUMBLE

B reezewood, Pennsylvania, might be the prettiest-named ugly place in America. The unincorporated town is known for its neon strip tucked snugly into an asphalt armpit between Interstate 70 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

It has always been a place for travelers. Native Americans blazed early trails in the area; Conestoga wagons also rumbled through. In 1940, an interchange connected the new Pennsylvania Turnpike toll road with Breezewood's bit of Route 30. Then in the mid-1960s, a stretch of I-70 from Maryland's state line to Breezewood was completed. And things got weird. Pennsylvania had the option to use federal money to build an interchange for the new highway at Breezewood, but-due to a funding technicality—declined. Instead, I-70 was extended to meet up with U.S. 30, detouring cars through the town's two stoplights and past a bevy of businesses.

Today more than six million cars per year travel through Breezewood. If they had a choice (they don't), it's likely most would breeze right by.

-MAGGIE ZACKOWITZ



Breezewood sells gas-and shot glasses.

STEVE MCCURRY (WOMAN), JULIE HUFF (SOUVENIR GLAS)

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Sharks, including whitetip reef sharks, circle coral in the new Pitcairn Islands Marine Reserve.

PRISTINE SEAS

TREASURE ISLANDS

A remote archipelago in the Pacific Ocean anchors the world's largest contiguous marine reserve. he clearest visibility ever measured in the Pacific Ocean" is how marine ecologist and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence Enric Sala describes the waters around the British-governed Pitcairn Islands. Sala traveled there with other scientists as part of the National Geographic Society's Pristine Seas project. "The remote archipelago, east of Australia, was hypnotic, teeming with schools of thousands of fish—red snappers, parrotfish, rudderfish—in an ocean from a thousand years ago. We observed extraordinary things, from a pristine reef with blue corals that looked like giant roses to...species never reported before for the Pitcairn Islands. Also remarkable was the abundance of sharks, which signals a healthy ecosystem. Never having seen a human or heard a motor, they were very curious."

Thanks in part to Sala's expedition, along with the Pitcairn Islands and the Pew Charitable Trusts, the British government in March established the world's largest contiguous marine reserve, encompassing some 322,000 square miles. Sala's account of the expedition appears in the new National Geographic book *Pristine Seas: Journeys to the Ocean's Last Wild Places*.

■ VISIT PITCAIRN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDS ON THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC EXPEDITION "TAHITI TO EASTER ISLAND: TALES OF THE PACIFIC."



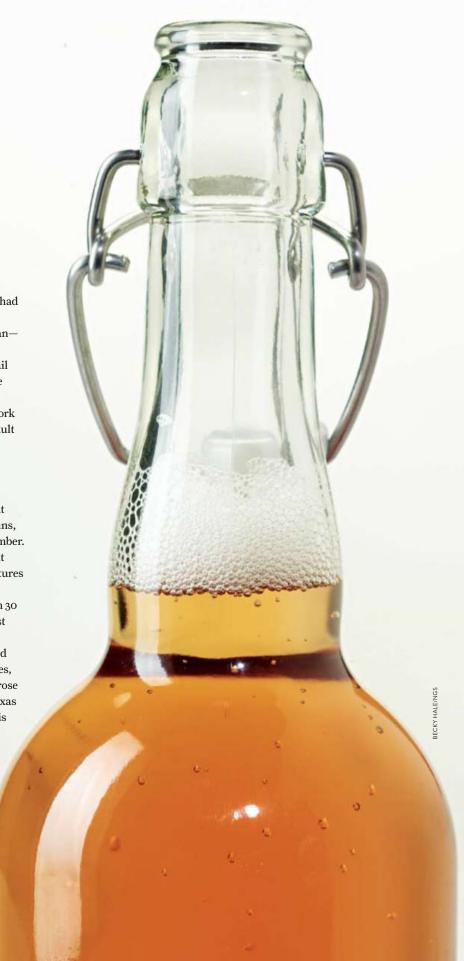
FOOD & DRINK

Hard Cider Season

The slightly sweet, sparkling classic is at the height of its harvest.

f you go back 350 years in America, every farm had orchards and everyone drank hard cider," says Brian Rutzen, the cider director of the Northman—a cider bar opening this fall in Chicago. Cider's on everyone's lips again, thanks to the classic cocktail resurgence, the "slow food" movement, and even the gluten-free trend. Giant brewers have all gotten involved, and cider-only bars from Seattle to New York City are cropping up. Here's where to savor these adult versions of apple juice across the U.S.

MIDWEST "Michigan is now the third largest applegrowing state behind Washington and New York," says Rutzen. He recommends Vander Mill cidery out of Spring Lake and Uncle John's Cider Mill in St. Johns, which offers a tasting room open from May to December. NORTHEAST The Big Apple's first cidery, Descendant Cider Company, opened last year in Queens and features small-batch ciders made entirely from Empire State apples. You can't tour, but you can drink its ciders in 30 bars throughout the city. Our top choice? Lower East Side's Wassail, a sleek cider bar and restaurant that opened this spring. WEST COAST Finnriver Farm and Cidery, home to more than 4,000 apple and pear trees, mixes botanicals like locally harvested fir tips and rose hips into its blends. SOUTH Austin Eastciders in Texas plans to open a tasting room in artsy East Austin this year. In the meantime, visit Half Step for a Cider Julep-Eastciders Dry, Calvados, sugar, fresh mint, and angostura bitters. - JENNY ADAMS



HAWAI'I'S TOP SNORKELING SPOTS

Sure, Hawai'i is known for its impossibly beautiful beaches. But the Islands boast an impressive underwater world that can't be missed. Here, four bucket-list-worthy snorkeling spots in the Aloha State.

Slip into the crystal clear waters of Kealakekua Bay on **Hawai'i Island**. Situated just 12 miles south of historic Kailua Village, the Marine Life Conservation District offers the chance to see spinner dolphins, endangered green sea turtles, and in the winter, humpback whales. If you're in the mood for adventure, head to Makua, or Tunnels Beach, on the north shore of **Kaua'i**. The idyllic spot, which is calmest in the summer,

boasts underwater caverns and lava tubes, perfect for Cousteau wannabes. At Makena Landing, on Maui's southwest shore, you'll spot everything from Moorish Idols to sea urchins and vibrant coral. For sun-seekers, drive five minutes south to Makena Beach State Park and grab some sand at "Big Beach." Aptly named, since this is one of the largest beaches on Maui. O'ahu's North Shore is known for its massive winter surf swells. But in the summer, the waves calm, and snorkeling at Shark's Cove-part of the Pūpūkea Marine Life Conservation Districtis a must-do. Don a snorkel mask and fins to see underwater rock formations, coral caves, and tunnels teeming with tropical reef fish.





Kealakekua Bay, Hawai'i Island (top); Makua Beach, Kaua'i (above). Photos courtesy Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA)/Tor Johnson

To plan your vacation to the Hawaiian Islands, visit gohawaii.com.







ADVENTURE

Urban Dash

Three American cities that are made for running

BOSTON The Charles River and the Emerald Necklace string of parks both offer mostly uninterrupted running on paved and dirt paths throughout Greater Boston. Along the Charles, you can enjoy a short, flat run past Harvard, MIT, and Boston University, or log up to 17 miles round-trip from the Museum of Science to Watertown. The Necklace stretches seven gently hilly miles from Boston Common and the Public Garden—past waterways through Back Bay Fens, Olmsted Park, Jamaica Pond, and Arnold Arboretum—to Franklin Park.

SAN FRANCISCO The 6.5-mile-long waterfront promenade, from the Giants ballpark to Fort Point beneath the Golden Gate Bridge, affords close-up views of the bay and the city's two great bridges. It's primarily flat and paved—and traffic free except for a few blocks through Fisherman's Wharf. Just follow the water. That rule also applies to the three-mile run along Ocean Beach, which is where you can head inland for a seven-mile loop of Golden Gate Park.

WASHINGTON, D.C. Skip the walking tours: You can see most of D.C.'s monuments on the National Mall, a five-mile round-trip run between the U.S. Capitol and the Lincoln Memorial. For more serene surroundings, run the oak-shaded trails in Rock Creek Park, which wind through several parks in nine rolling miles from Georgetown to the Maryland border and beyond. The nearly flat C&O Canal towpath heads north from Georgetown into Maryland alongside the scenic Potomac River (look for eagles and herons). —BOB COOPER

ICON

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOOTH

he United Kingdom's signature red phone booths are still in demand, but not just for calls anymore. In response to resident requests, British Telecommunications began selling the booths for £1 in 2008. Now, more than 2,500 have been adopted.

Last year, two London School of Economics innovators fashioned one into a free cellphone charging station on Tottenham Court Road. The success of the solar-powered stall, visited about 80 times a day, led to funding for ten more in the city's center, and the founders often receive queries from those around the globe who want to follow suit.

But technology isn't the only way these booths reconnect with locals. Some have transformed into art galleries, coffee shops, defibrillator stations, and mini-libraries that operate on a take-one, leave-one policy and hold as many as 300 books. Gloucester company English Phone Boxes can even fulfill custom requests, which include everything from mini-offices to pint-size bars.

-MONIKA JOSHI



An English library, dialed down

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Once an important part of city industry, Milan's old navigli (canals) are in the midst of a revival.

Milan has ideas, always had. Food. Fashion. Design. Television. Advertising. Publishing. Milan is the country's go-to city for all these sectors, plus industry, commerce, and finance—leaving only politics, public television, and cinema to Rome. Go to Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II on Piazza del Duomo and take the escalator to Niko Romito's brand-new restaurant, Spazio. Look down into the Galleria, the mother and father of all shopping malls, alive with activity. You'll see why Europe has always treated Milan with respect.

Cross the square and take an elevator to the roof of the cathedral, the Duomo. Lose yourself among the pinnacles and spires, observe the city and the plain below as the golden statue of the Madonnina seems to float in the air. If God ever built a sand castle, this is what it would look like. Walk back into the Galleria and exit the opposite end, where Piazza della Scala lies, with the opera house and Palazzo Marino, the city hall. Beauty and politics keep an eye on

each other, like suspicious relatives. Sit in the square and watch the Milanese coming down from Via Manzoni and the fashion quadrangle to the Ristorante Trussardi. In summer, the scent of linden trees fills the air.

Just around the corner, Milan dances to a faster beat. The courtyards of the Università Statale, a former hospital, and the Accademia di Brera buzz with students. Arco della Pace and Colonne di San Lorenzo belong to the autonomous republic of the aperitif. So do the *navigli*, the old waterways that converge on the newly opened Darsena basin. Yes, Milan has got its river back at last! Have a stroll, linger in any of the cafés. Take your time. Look at us, the Italiani, how we talk with our smiles, our eyes, our hands. How we try to impress you, and often succeed.

Dinner? The new rooftop restaurant in the Triennale museum. Does the view from there look like Manhattan's Central Park? Maybe, but around you *la grande bellezza*, the great beauty, is different. Parco

Sempione, dark green; Castello Sforzesco, bathed in orange light; the slender, silver buildings of Piazza Gae Aulenti that brought Milan's skyline into the 21st century.

Milan has gusto, both in the English sense of keen enjoyment and with the Italian meaning of good taste. Expo Milano 2015 opened May 1, with 145 countries exhibiting, and instantly became a movable feast. Feeding the planet—the theme for the world's fair this year—is important. But feeding the Italian spirit, after years in the economic doldrums, matters too. This opportunity for Italy is a serious attempt to ponder nutrition and a fantastic six-monthlong party, to boot. Expo 2015 is the world as it would like to be, and isn't.

But it looks, it sounds, and it smells like Milan. And that is good.

BEPPE SEVERGNINI is a columnist for Milan's Corriere della Sera and the author of 15 books, including the best-selling La Bella Figura: A Field Guide to the Italian Mind.







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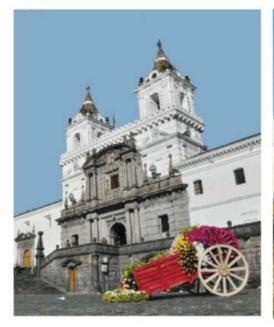






LET'S GO QUITO

You're down for five adventure-packed days in and around this dazzling 9,350-foot-high city. Placed amid snow-crowned peaks, the Ecuadorian capital buzzes with excitement and possibility. Get ready for a crystalline-air, high-peak-and-cloud-forest thrill of a lifetime.





San Francisco in the historic center of Quito (left); Cotopaxi is the second-highest active volcano in the world (right).

DAY 1

Start your Quito adventure in the city's historic center and marvel at its splendid architecture and energetic daily life. Take in centuries-old churches such as La Compañia de Jesus or La Basilica, the towers of which offer a spectacular view of the colonial and modern city.



Locro de papa (cheesy potato soup)

Visit cobblestoned La Ronda
Street and discover traditional
crafts in paint, wood, ironwork,
metalwork, and ceramics. Try an
"energy cleanse" with herbs from
the 120-year-old San Francisco
market. Indulge in local delicacies
like chocolate, coffee, locro de
papa (cheesy potato soup), paila
ice cream (hand-churned in
a large copper bowl), and chicha
(a maize or fruit juice, fermented
or not). You can also buy fresh
ingredients and have a chef prepare
one of Quito's signature dishes.

DAY 2

Time to get out and see the city from the western heights. A cable car will transport you from 9,186 to 13,287 feet in a thrilling

8 minutes. At the top you'll have spectacular views of the capital and the valleys and volcanoes that surround it. If you're up for it, you can take a two-hour hike to Ruco Pichincha, one of the two highest peaks of Pichincha volcano at 15.387 feet.

To the north of the city you can experience the history and mystery of the Equator, an icon of this ancient land. Put one foot in each hemisphere, and learn about the importance of the Equator in astronomy and how the ancients may have understood its location and significance. Nearby, visit Pululahua volcano and its Geobotanical Reserve, one of the few inhabited craters in the world. Bike, hike, and birdwatch in this unique cloud forest microclimate.

DAY 3

Pure outdoor adventure. An hour and a half south of Quito by train or car, Cotopaxi National Park awaits your discovery. Here in the second most visited of Ecuador's national parks (after Galápagos), you can hike, mountain bike, and camp within view of the stunning, boulder-strewn, snow-covered crater. Those in superb condition can hire a guide and make a gradual ascent into the thin air of Cotopaxi, the second-highest active volcano in the world at 19,347 feet. Outside the park, you can visit or stay in one of the many Andean haciendas and observe the equestrian skills of the chagras, Ecuadorian cowboys. Why not go for a horseback ride yourself and imagine the days of

ADVENTURE TRAVEL GUIDE

the Spanish colonial landowners and their grand ranches? A little farther south, visit plantations that grow some of the best roses in the world.

Put one foot in each hemisphere, and learn about the importance of the Equator in astronomy.

From the cold and high altitude

to the heat of the cloud forest. Northwest of Quito lie several reserves ideal for watching

endemic and rare birds. These

conservation sites rank among the

internationally recognized IBAs (Important Bird Areas). Visit in August to see the spectacled bear,

the only bear of the Andes.

DAY 4

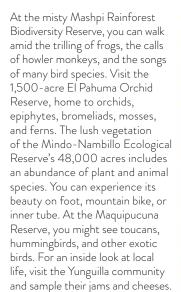
DAY 5

Adrenaline on two wheels. If biking is your thing, there are several options around Quito. The best known is Chaquiñán (Quichua for "path"), which follows old rail lines. You can pedal from Cumbaya up to Puembo (about 12 miles), or east of the city out to the little town of Tumbaco (7 miles). The more experienced will want to cycle the challenging highland routes. You can go from the top of Cima de la Libertad to Cruz Loma, on the slopes of the Pichincha volcano. The 48-mile Nono to Nanegalito route, with its breathtaking descent, is another popular spin. And then there's the Pacto to Mashpi trail, where your adventure winds up with a refreshing dip in the river.

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Bikers on the Pacto to Mashpi route (below)





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Think of a marine activity and do it. Kiteboard the wind and waves; kayak a shimmering world of seagrass beds and tidal flats; paddleboard the wetlands; tour offshore to see tropical fish, dolphins, manatees, crocodiles, and roseate spoonbills. Venture out to Lignumvitae Key State Botanical Site, a hammock forest atop the remains of an ancient coral reef. Or visit Windley Key Fossil Reef State Geological Site.

Fins and More

Sportfishing was practically invented here. You can charter fish the shallows, reefs, and deep water. Go for catch-and-release tarpon, yellow snapper, kingfish, and mahi mahi; or bring your prize in to a local restaurant and have the chef prepare it to your liking.



Fishing is a favorite activity in Islamorada.

Strap on a pair of fins yourself and dive on the *Eagle*, a freighter scuttled in 105 feet of water and now a lively reef. Or be a hero for a day: Join a restoration crew and help clean a coral nursery.

In the village, sample the dockside fish houses and gourmet cafes. And cruise the cool galleries of Morada Way Arts & Cultural District.

For details, visit fla-keys.com/islamorada.



ADVENTURE TRAVEL GUIDE

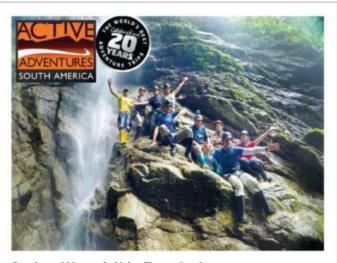




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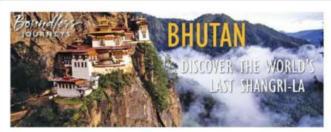


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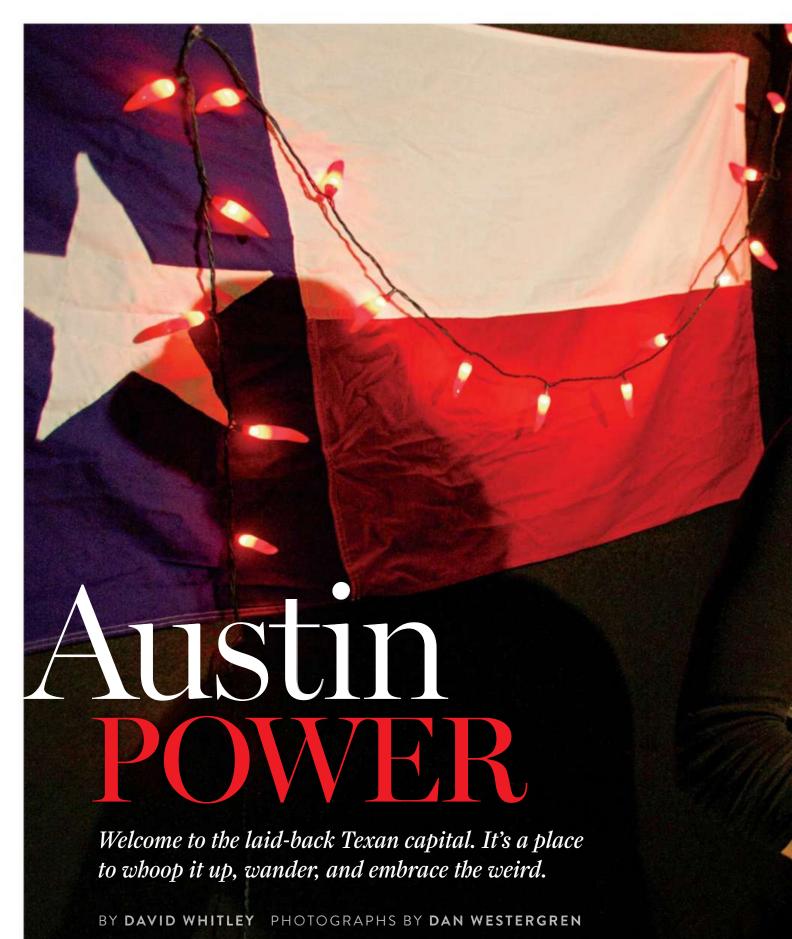
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uttural roars escape from the death metal club across the road. The bartender hands out cans of beer to people who want to drink them in the street. Two guys with beards caked with pizza brought in from the food truck next door discuss whether to go and see ZZ Top tomorrow night. Queues mount outside a barbecue joint, responding to rumors of a secret gig by a big-name band that would usually be playing on a larger stage.

Wednesday night Austin feels woozily alive. Staggering slightly, but brimming with confidence and invention. Music oozes from its sweaty pores, genre an irrelevance as long as it's live. It's the fuel powering the city's energy and its eagerness to

teeter on the edge of irresponsibility. It's Margaritaville with a few cans of Red Bull chucked in, easygoing good times laced with youthful adrenaline.

The fastest growing city in the U.S. may be the capital of Texas, but it feels as if it's in a constant state of rebellion against all that surrounds it. Austin's charged liberalism and determined individuality kick and scream against the conservatism of Texan typecasting. "Keep Austin Weird" is a semiofficial slogan; "Don't Dallas My Austin" is a T-shirt and bumpersticker clarion call against the sprawling big-business neighbor to the north.

It hasn't always been this way. The transformation from cow town to capital of cool arguably began in 1987, when the





Clockwise from left: Bartender Zack Flores pours a drink at the Hotel San José in the SoCo district. Locals and visitors alike patronize South Austin Trailer Park & Eatery, one of several stationary food truck stops in the city. A Texas longhorn embellishes boots at Allens.



South by Southwest festival was first set up here. Part creative industries trade show, part music gig epidemic taking over most of the town, it has spurred Austin's ballooning festival calendar.

The University of Texas has always ensured a youthful presence, but the city has become fresh-faced with an influx of enthusiastic musicians, artists, and tech pioneers.

Austin isn't a place for rigid itineraries or working through checklists. It's a place for acting on overheard tip-offs, for following instincts and whims.

Yet, once the sun comes up and the haze subsides, a pervading dressed-down relaxedness reveals the city's charm and counterbalances the charge. Off-leash dogs loll in parks,

mosquito-swatting canoeists glide past, and "y'alls" pepper conversations in a betrayal of the valiant fight against Texan roots.

CAPITAL CACHET

SOUTH CONGRESS AVENUE If one street captures the Keep Austin Weird vibe, this is it. Just about every building flanking South Congress rewards the inquisitive. Shop signs are cartoonish neon artworks, cafés and food trucks provide prime peoplewatching opportunities, and fashion statements ranging from confidently individual to thoroughly absurd strut along the sidewalk.

BARTON SPRINGS POOL Surrounded by Zilker Park abutting Lady Bird Lake, this is one of the greatest urban swimming venues





on Earth. Its three acres of spring-fed waters are a constant 68°F all year, with the odd fish or salamander to tickle your feet. Watching college students try to impress each other with elaborate leaps from the diving board is half the fun.

CONGRESS AVENUE BRIDGE Up to 1.5 million Mexican free-tailed bats live under the bridge spanning Lady Bird Lake. During the summer and early fall, they go insect-hunting around sunset, creating a sky-filling speckled black cloud.

TEXAS STATE CAPITOL The shape mimics that of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., but Texans' typical one-upmanship ensured theirs was built 15 feet taller. Crafted from local red granite, the capitol provides free tours punctuated with quirky details about the building's history and design.

BULLOCK TEXAS STATE HISTORY MUSEUM Just north of the capitol, this museum gives a handy rundown of why Texas is what it is. Epic independence battles against Mexico, the birth of ranching, and the impact of the discovery of oil are all covered. HARRY RANSOM CENTER Part of the giant University of Texas campus, this treasure trove of old documents and artifacts has two big hitters—an original Gutenberg Bible and, remarkably, the first known photograph ever taken.

LBJ PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY Few presidents ushered through as many social reforms as native Texan Lyndon Baines Johnson, although he's usually remembered for the Vietnam War. His presidential library offers an engrossing look into his life, work, and character-but also a snapshot of a transformative period in recent history.

ALAMO DRAFTHOUSE Cinema, Austin style. This Sixth Street institution is notorious for its gloriously silly screenings, such as The Big Lebowski and Wayne's World quote-a-longs, complete with comedy props.

VINYL AND VINTAGE

ALLENS BOOTS It's not so much a whiff of leather upon entering as a full-on nasal assault. Allens is Western-wear browsing with a wow factor (boots stitched with the Texas flag, anyone?). WATERLOO RECORDS It's what all record stores should be—with a genre-spanning collection, regular live performances, and late evening hours.

WHOLE FOODS MARKET The healthy food store started in Austin, and its massive headquarters is a social gathering space complete with a wine bar, taco stand, and Italian trattoria.

UNCOMMON OBJECTS Antiques, conversation pieces, miniature art displays—this warren of much loved old junk is a joy to wander through.

INSIDER TIPS

BANG FOR A BUCK Most people drive in Texas, but locals coming from the airport hop on the 100 bus, which handily drops off riders downtown and around the University of Texas campus. It leaves every half hour and costs \$1.75.

PICK UP THE PAPER The Austin American-Statesman is the main local newspaper, but the weekly Austin Chronicle has a steadier finger on the pulse.

FEST PREP AHEAD Austin's crammed calendar has a downside accommodation prices, which don't tend to be budget-friendly in the first place, skyrocket when big festivals are on. Book months in advance for a good deal.



The Scallywag—coconut-battered shrimp, bacon, pickled onions, and habañero peach jam (above)—tops the menu of specialty tacos at Torchy's. Vintage-style neon signs (below) light up the Roadhouse Relics studio and gallery. Early risers dip into Barton Springs Pool (right).





GET SOME SHUT-EYE

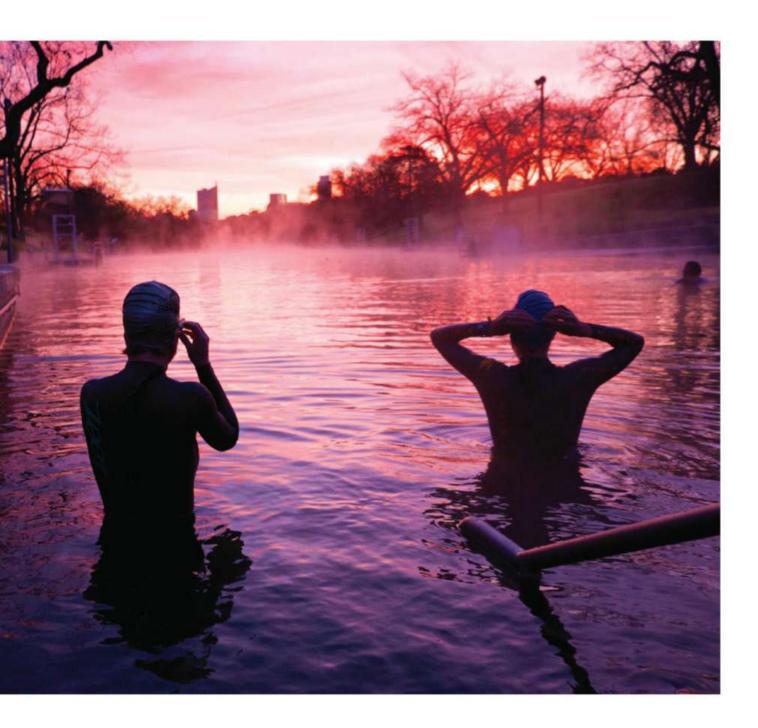
Unless you want to spend a lot on taxis, aim for digs reasonably close to the action downtown, on South Congress Avenue, or near the University of Texas.

AUSTIN MOTEL The somewhat phallic neon sign outside proclaims this motel to be "So close, yet so far out." Along with an eclectic array of guest rooms boasting murals, the kidney-shaped pool, affordable rates, and free parking draw crowds. THE HOTEL SAN JOSÉ A favorite with visiting bands, this spot features rainbow bathrobes and cowskin rugs that help you forgive the occasional lapse into too-cool-for-school minimalism. W AUSTIN HOTEL This property has rock-star swagger: living-room-style lounge areas, iPad chargers, and poolside cabanas.

BARBECUE AND BEYOND

White-tablecloth fine dining is an option in Austin, but it misses the point—this is a sociable burger, BBQ, and burrito town. TORCHY'S TACOS A brick-and-mortar child of the food truck scene, Torchy's combines inventive ideas with local ingredients. Vegans flock here for tacos stuffed with fried avocados, portobello mushrooms, and roasted corn. The dark chocolate brownies are made from scratch.

LAMBERTS In the heart of downtown, this lively bistro serves a classier version of Texas smoked barbecue alongside comforting dishes of deviled eggs, fried green tomatoes, and baked mac and cheese. An upstairs lounge features live music most nights. VESPAIO This is the best bet for inspired Italian food, yet the



atmosphere manages to remain in harmony with the go-yourown-way vibe of its South Congress Avenue surrounds.

LATE-NIGHT MERRYMAKING

Sixth Street is famous for bar crawls, but it attracts a young, student crowd that uses "party" as a verb. Head elsewhere. BANGER'S Rainey Street—where new bars pop up inside old houses seemingly every week—is infinitely more lovable. Banger's, with its egalitarian Bavarian-beer-hall-style benches and 101 craft tap beers, is an excellent starting point. STUBB'S A few blocks north of Rainey Street, the Red River District has a bar with live music for every conceivable taste. Stubb's is the top dog—the guys behind the Austin City Limits

music festival book the bands here and pull in big names. SPEAKEASY Multistage, multibar Speakeasy is a reliable and central safe bet-whether you want to catch an up-and-coming math rock (rhythmic, guitar-based music) band or chill with an expertly mixed cocktail over the backroom pool table. THE BROKEN SPOKE Cold beer, good grub, and real country music make this honky-tonk a standout. Two-step dance lessons are offered Wednesday through Saturday at 8 p.m.

British writer DAVID WHITLEY lives in Sheffield, England. This was the first trip to Austin for Traveler's director of photography DAN WESTERGREN. This story is a collaboration with our U.K. edition, National Geographic Traveller.

Café Society

ETS ès 22H.

Parisians have elevated strolling, lingering, and people-watching to an art. They even have a word for it: *flânerie*.

BY TARA ISABELLA BURTON
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER TURNLEY





NE PLACE, MADAME?"

Seated on one of the mismatched chairs at the café La Bourse ou la Vie ("the money or your life"), his yellow suspenders holding in a roll of flesh, my interrogator peers at me through round-rimmed spectacles, waves me past, and turns back toward his companions.

He is telling a story, ostensibly to them, but from the bombastic way his voice echoes off the yellow ceiling, he clearly wants me to hear it too. It's a folktale, drawn from the works of the 17th-century fabulist Jean de La Fontaine, of a heron that refuses to eat anything but the finest food. The man spreads his arms in imitation of the bird—nearly knocking one hapless diner off his feet—and begins to chirp wildly. Then he stops. He has spotted someone he knows, driving down Rue Vivienne.

On this balmy June afternoon, the café doors are wide open; nothing separates us from the pavement and street outside. He calls to his friend, who brakes in front of the café. They chat—about work, life, politics—oblivious to the motorists honking around them. At last he waves his hand. The friend drives on, and the raconteur resumes his storytelling.

It is only when I glimpse the painting on a

nearby wall-of an almost naked man posing, pinup style, in round-rimmed spectacles-that I realize he is Patrice Tartard, the owner.

Next, a young man arrives. Effusive in his greetings, he shakes his host's hand with what looks like a mix of reverence and terror. He picks up a menu; his host yanks it away, barking, "Un autre pouletanother chicken." The waiter hustles off.

Someone else now catches Tartard's eye, a motorcyclist riding by, chatting on his cellphone. This Tartard dislikes. He lets loose a stream of epithets—colorful to profane—until the rider has passed. He returns at last to his tale, winking my way as he again poses like a heron. His dining companions look at me helplessly across the table.

"Typical French," one sighs.

FEW THINGS ARE more French than the artful interplay of voyeurism and performance that takes place at a Parisian café. People-watching is, after all, among the most entrenched of Parisian pastimes. In the 1800s, as industrialization transformed Paris into one of the world's great metropolises, flânerie—a word meaning to stroll around aimlessly but implying an attention to passersby—was raised to an art form. Flâneurs such as novelist Honoré de Balzac and the poet Charles Baudelaire would promenade down the newly constructed grands boulevards of Paris's Right Bank, where broad sidewalks and proliferating cafés provided a perfect vantage point from which to cast a glance at memorable passersby. Some flåneurs, gossip has it, promenaded with pet turtles to ensure a slow pace. Whole books were devoted to "la ville spectacle," the city of entertainment, as Paris was

Whether catching up on the news (opposite) or spending time with good friends (opening pages), much of Parisian life takes place in the capital's ubiquitous cafés.







known then, urban field guides to particular types of passersby one might spy *en flânant*.

As a child growing up on Paris's Left Bank, I dreamed of living in the 19th-century Paris of flâneur writers like Balzac, Baudelaire, and Émile Zola. I rode my bicycle through the warren-like streets of the city's 9th arrondissement, home of Zola's courtesans and Baudelaire's degenerates, and up the cobblestoned streets of Montmartre, in love with the Paris of the novels I had read and the centuries in which I had never lived. That led me to my doctoral studies in 19th-century French literature—and, now, back to Paris, where I am about to become a 21st-century flaneuse.

I begin where I cycled as a child, the 9th arrondissement boulevards once paraded by a burgeoning bourgeoisie. To my dismay, I find little echo of the world Baudelaire and Balzac described. Globally branded stores glitter under wrought iron balconies; the Parisians hurrying past them don't look up from their phones. If anyone should chance to bring a turtle here, it would soon be crushed underfoot. Undeterred, I turn off Boulevard Haussmann and head toward Galerie Vivienne, one of Paris's famous passages, or glass-roofed shopping galleries. Few structures evoke the 1800s like these galleries inspired by Middle Eastern souks. Parisians added a vital element—glazed roofing—which allowed light to flood the interior, creating what 20th-century social critic Walter Benjamin called "a city in miniature." Forming a nearly continuous trail from the grand boulevards to the artists' haunt of Montmartre, the galleries were places where people, like wares, could advertise themselves. In other words, a flâneur's natural home.

Under Galerie Vivienne's glass ceiling, set off by painted nymphs flanking neoclassical archways, I linger by an antiquarian bookshop, ready to practice a little flânerie of my own. The shop's windows reflect nearby café tables, allowing me to observe a charismatic young man and an impeccably dressed 40-something blonde who sit at adjacent tables, their eyes purportedly on their books. I watch their reflections as they glance at each other in turn, as they smile. I reach back to grab a book I can pretend to read as I peep at them, realizing too late I've opened a volume of erotic nudes. By the time I swivel back, they've set their books down and are making small talk. By the time I leave, they're laughing.

Each of Paris's galleries, I'll discover, has its own stories, only half-told by the time I pass through. In the Passage des Panoramas—famous, in Zola's novel Nana, as the place where his titular courtesan meets her lovers—the story may be missed opportunities. I spy a woman of a certain age, overdressed in blue chiffon, sitting alone on the terrace of L'Arbre à Cannelle, a traditional brasserie with a 19th-century facade of delicately carved wood. She sits straight-backed in her chair, her dyed blond hair arranged in a flapper style. Passersby jostle her on their way to Noglu, a gluten-free takeout spot next door, but she takes no heed. She appears to be waiting for someone. No one comes. Across the passage, in a dealership of rare stamps, the elderly proprietor sits alone at his register, nursing a steak tartare and a glass of red wine. He may be a widower, unaccustomed to solitude—or he may have dined this way for 65 years. Every character in this city where everybody is watching is an unanswered question. Their stories are left to my imagination.

I finish my walk through the 9th arrondissement at the Musée de la Vie Romantique, devoted to the lives and loves of such 19th-century bohemians as the author George Sand—nom de plume of Amantine-Lucile-Aurore Dupin, famous for her feminist novels and tempestuous affair with the composer Frédéric Chopin—and the painter Eugène Delacroix, flâneurs in their own right. A pinch-nosed matron leads schoolchildren around the museum, reciting facts about Sand, who was "great at many things. A great writer. A great intellectual. A great amoureuse."

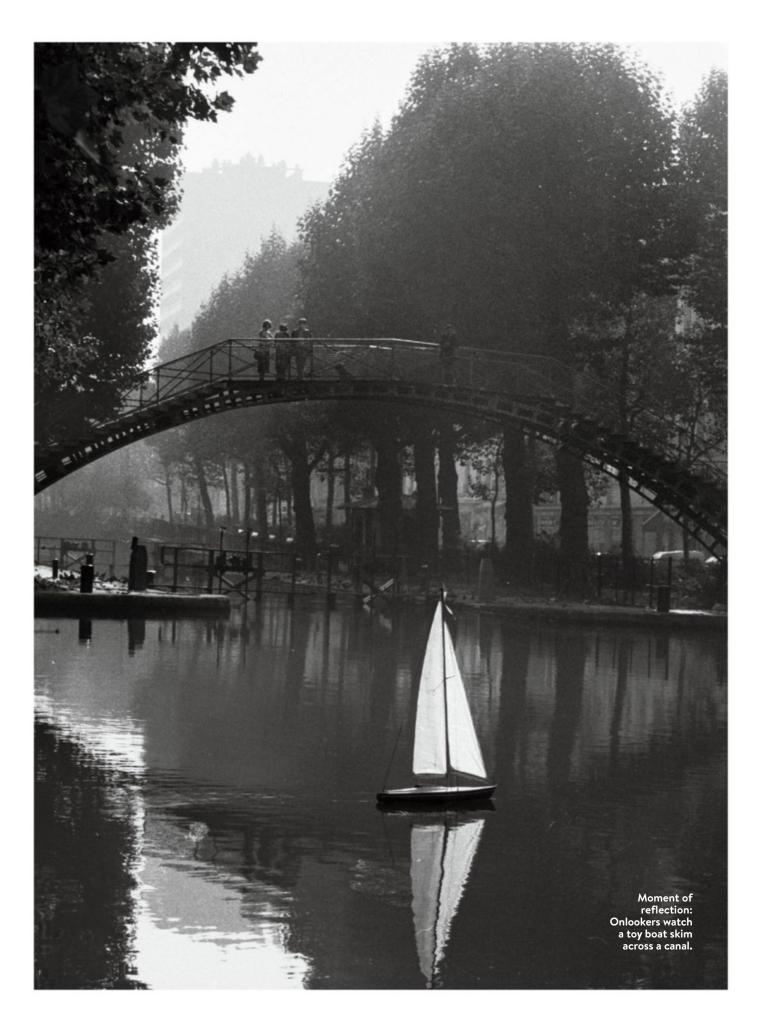
But here, as in the galleries, it is the present, not the past, that seizes my attention. The lovers who interest me are not the ones behind glass. An elderly couple meanders through the museum, whispering and holding hands so devotedly that at one point they trip over an antique chair. When I spot them later in the garden, he's showering her hand with kisses—an intimate moment only a flâneur would be privy to.

F THE BOULEVARD CAFÉS and the galleries represent two of the great urban theaters of the *ville spectacle*, the third is the department store, what Balzac called "the great poem of display, [chanting] its stanzas of color from the Madeleine to the gate of Saint-Denis." In the 19th century, these establishments, innovative at the time, were more than places to buy goods; they were venues in which to see and be seen, runways where one would compare sartorial choices. Studio 54 with cash registers.

I meet my childhood friend James Geist—a Parisian law student of Franco-Algerian descent—at Le Bon Marché, Paris's oldest department store, which inspired Zola's novel of commerce and seduction, *The Ladies' Paradise*. While Printemps and the Galeries Lafayette are better known, Geist tells me, it's only at Le Bon Marché, farther from the tourist hordes, that one finds remnants of old Paris, including the interplay of flânerie and showing off that defines so much of Parisian culture.

"In this city, it's all about seeing and being seen," Geist says. Today is a perfect day for flânerie, he informs me. The *soldes*, a government-determined period for sales, are taking place; all Parisians, rich and poor, are coming out to shop—and see who else is shopping. "Everything is a symbol," Geist says. "In New York or London, labels are what matter." Here, he notes, distinctions are more subtle: the construction of a shoe, the stitching on a handbag, the design on a scarf—all form a complex visual language through which Parisians communicate.

As we ascend an escalator to the women's section, light from the stained glass ceiling illuminating wrought iron balustrades, Geist points out Parisian character types. There's a man he identifies as a dandy from the trendy Marais district, with a long beard, sailor shirt, turquoise scarf. Near him, a balding businessman hunts for a suit with his mother, a dowager with lips that signal contempt.







"But *maman*, this one isn't as good as the Saint Laurent!" he whines as we pass. "Just get it," she snaps without changing her expression.

Then Geist spies our target. Barely five feet one, with immaculately highlighted hair and a face moisturized into agelessness, she represents the ultimate Parisienne of eras past. Her understated Hermès bag and high-waisted trousers signal her identity as a matriarch of the 7th arrondissement, Paris's bastion of vestigial titles and inherited wealth. She roves through the shop floor at right angles, picking up and then discarding scarves, blouses, shoes. She is mechanical in her search for that single object that will bring her outfit together.

Geist laughs. "In Paris, even leisure is a craft," he says.

I do ti

HE NEXT DAY, Geist ferries me to Café de Flore, on Boulevard St. Germain. If the boulevards of the Right Bank were the prime locations for flâneurs of the

19th century, the café *terrasses* of Boulevard St. Germain became the spiritual home of the café dwellers of the Lost Generation, which came of age during the First World War. The art deco interior of Flore once welcomed intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and Albert Camus. Today, despite the influx of tourists, Geist tells me, Flore—with its neighbor and rival, Les Deux Magots—remains one of the city's great places to practice flânerie.

No sooner do we arrive than we find our "theater." Three gentlemen in their 60s, bellies bulging through their blazers, read newspapers around a table. They are, Geist and I both decide, perfect subjects, managing that delicate balance between eccentricity and self-awareness that is so necessary in this city of performers.

A cocker spaniel rummages for leftover pieces of croissants beneath their feet. Its owner, a man with a white beard flecked right now with coffee, raps the dog, Caliphe, on the nose with a newspaper for overindulging in croissants, then announces his departure. "Je vais lire mon roman—I'm going to read my novel." Rumbling to his feet, he bids his companions farewell.

He proceeds five steps along the boulevard before we see him shrug and turn back, resuming his place, no explanation. His companions require none. Caliphe jumps up to claim an adjacent chair.

The man holds court for two more hours. His companions leave; more arrive. The waiter brings a note, on Café de Flore stationery, from another patron. A young man stops to pet Caliphe, greets the man affectionately. A co-worker brings files, and is persuaded to stay.

"How," she asks him, "do you know all these people?" He shrugs and smiles. "I know everyone."

Behind us, a young man with prematurely white hair and

tortoiseshell glasses is leaning in, eavesdropping, just as we are. When the man takes out his camera-phone to snap a discreet photograph, Geist whispers, "Now that's a real flâneur." We stifle a laugh. But soon my friend grows serious. Flânerie is more than a source of amusement, he says.

"It's a philosophy, an ideal. We're all such egoists nowadays, at least in Paris. People-watching is a way for us Parisians to get outside of our heads and be reminded that others exist."

As he speaks, we catch a glimpse of the patrician woman from Le Bon Marché. Her outfit is identical to what she wore the day before, with the addition of a shining silver bracelet. She catches Geist's eye, and for a moment I think she smiles.

ONE OF BAUDELAIRE'S most famous poems is "To a Passerby," about a momentary connection with a woman he spots and then soon loses in the crowd. "I know not where you fled, you know not where I go, O you whom I would have loved, O you who knew it!"

As I continue wandering the streets of Paris, Baudelaire's refrain haunts me. I find myself entering a world not of Balzac or Zola novels but of unfinished fragments, encountering characters whose beginnings and endings I will never know.

There is the man who is strolling along the Canal St. Martin reading a treatise by the philosopher Simone Weil, the book obscuring his face. There is the American girl in an expensive raincoat sobbing in the arms of a French nun on the steps of the Basilique Notre-Dame des Victoires. I catch only what echoes off the church's facade: "...the right person. But I've waited so long!" There is the middle-aged man at the small café in Montmartre, nervously clutching a bouquet of pink and yellow roses, who downs a glass of pastis and hurries on. There is the old man on the yellow steampunk bicycle near Boulevard de Sébastopol, with a series of vintage umbrellas fastened to the handlebars.

"What is that?" I ask him.

"Ça?" He laughs as he cycles off. "Ça, c'est la vie!"

ON MY FINAL DAY in Paris, I visit the resting place of one of my idols, Oscar Wilde, who spent his final months in the city and whose essays on artifice and performance made me fall in love with the idea of a *ville spectacle*. His sphinxlike tomb at the Père Lachaise cemetery is behind glass: So many admirers have kissed it that its surface has begun to decay.

As tourists arrive, leave flowers, and depart, I spy a young woman, in black, who remains behind. Her long blond hair falls over her notebook. I watch as she sits, sketches, looks up at the tomb. I take note of her dark glasses, her copper red lipstick, the way she sighs with relief when each passing tour group departs.

When I get up to go, she stops me.

"Madame!" Her English is halting. "I love your dress." She nods to the grave. "I feel sure he would have loved it too."

Only then do I look down at her sketchbook.

There, next to her rendition of Oscar Wilde's tomb, I see a portrait of me.

Writer TARA ISABELLA BURTON is working on a doctorate in theology and 19th-century French literature at Oxford University. Indiana-born photographer PETER TURNLEY divides his time between Paris and New York.

Paris, France

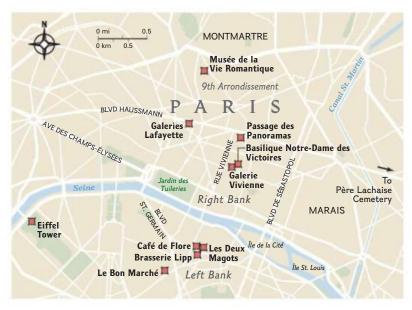
STROLL FRANCE'S capital and you'll see human nature on full display, from doyennes taking their *café* to lovers cooing by the River Seine. As poet Charles Baudelaire put it, in Paris "the spectator is a prince who everywhere rejoices in his incognito."

FLÂNEUR VENUES

Since the mid-1900s, the Boulevard St. Germain, on Paris's Left Bank, has been a preferred thoroughfare for flånerie. Its twin titans of café culture. Café de Flore and Les Deux Magots, attract visitors interested in literary history; the cafés' tables hosted such luminaries as Simone de Beauvoir and Albert Camus. Look closely today and you'll spot patrician dowagers and longtime locals who resist change, often occupying their "usual" tables for hours at a time even on busy nights. For a cozier flânerie experience, cross the boulevard to Brasserie Lipp, Ernest Hemingway's haunt. Favored customers here score the high-profile front table, but all

patrons enjoy front-row seats to the local scene.

Few restaurants evoke the glamour of 19th-century Paris like L'Arbre à Cannelle, in the Passage des Panoramas: actresses and courtesans from the nearby Théâtre des Variétés would rendezvous here with their lovers. Flâneurs can park themselves in the restaurant's frescoed interior or at "outdoor" seating under the glasscovered arcade, both good vantage points for observing the gallery's parade of shoppers. People-watching isn't restricted to cafés, of course. Get past the bouncers at Le Baron, a jewel box of a nightclub housed in a onetime brothel near the Arc de Triomphe, and you'll find yourself rubbing elbows with Parisian



socialites and such international celebs as Beyoncé and Björk.

SELECT LODGINGS

Creative types from Jean-Paul Sartre to Miles Davis to Salvador Dalí have convened at Hôtel La Louisiane. just off the Boulevard St. Germain. Dating to 1823, the Louisiane has 80 modest but comfy guest rooms; doubles from \$112. Fin de siècle bohemia once thrived on Paris's now trendy Right Bank—and still does at the Hôtel d'Albion (not to be

confused with the Hotel France Albion). where 26 colorful rooms sport such themes as "Poetry" and "Dance"; doubles from \$170. Prefer avant-garde digs? Then head east to the Belleville neighborhood, where the Paris-born designer Philippe Starck has transformed a parking garage into the gleefully playful Mama Shelter, equal parts restaurant, nightclub, and "concept hotel." Guests may don masks (provided) and take selfies with guest room computers.

The images upload to a server, offering an innovative way to people-watch from the comfort of your room. Doubles from \$110.



The Passage des Panoramas, which dates to 1800, was the first public building in Paris to try gas lighting.

Paris's largest cemetery, Père Lachaise is the resting place for such luminaries as writer Marcel Proust, painter Eugene Delacroix and rock star Jim Morrison.

The number of stop signs in Paris: one, in the 16th arrondissement. Drivers rely on right-of-way rules.

LOVE LETTER IN PHOTOGRAPHS THROUGH A LENS, DEEPLY

American photographer Peter Turnley fell for Paris in 1975 and moved to the French capital in 1978. "Paris always reminds me how wonderful life can be. Possibly more than any other city, the visual landscape here illustrates the poetry and power of love." Turnley captures these qualities in photos (left) from his 2013 book French Kiss: A Love Letter to Paris, which he calls "a tribute to the wonderful moments of romance, beauty, hope, and love I have been inspired by in my adopted home."



PETER TURNLEY/CORBIS (PHOTO); INTERNATIONAL MAPPING

REPORTED BY TARA ISABELLA BURTON OCTOBER 2015 57

101 Reasons





From a secret beach to an iconic work of art, the reasons that inspire us to travel are as myriad as stars. Here are the best tastes, places, experiences, and ideas we're currently crazy about.

By AMY ALIPIO and JENNIFER BARGER

MAGICAL MOROCCAN CAMEL RIDE

From the back of a camel, Morocco's Erg Chebbi ("sand sea") glows rose gold and orange at sunset. Overnighting in a Berber camp caps off a spiritual, meditative journey.



SCOTLAND'S OWN ROUTE 66

The new North Coast route is 500 rugged miles of photoworthy hillsides, castles, and seaside villages.

ALPACA APPAREL

Cloud-soft sweaters go for cheap at San Telmo market in Buenos Aires, where Argentine dealers in knitwear set up every Sunday.

4

ZIP-LINING OVER JODHPUR

Combine a thrill ride with Indian history via Flying Fox's zip-line course above sites such as the 15th-century Mehrangarh Fort.

FLOWER POWER

The night-blooming cereus opens up for just one evening a year, usually between late May and late July. Arizona's Tohono Chul Park, in Tucson, holds the country's largest collection of the cacti.

PUCKER UP IN ZANZIBAR

Tangy fresh tamarind juice makes for a restorative breakfast on a rooftop terrace overlooking the streets of Stone Town.

STRONGER DOLLAR

With the euro, the Japanese yen, and other currencies at a historic low against the dollar, travel for Americans is cheaper than usual.

WILL WORK FOR WINE

We can't think of a better locale to try our hand at WWOOFing (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) than on a vineyard in Australia's Barossa Valley.

KOH BULON

That idyllic untrampled Thai beach you've been dreaming of? This is it.

10

WALK THIS WAY

Big Apple views loom and cars zoom below as you stroll across the Brooklyn Bridge walkway, still the most scenic approach into Manhattan.

11

DUBLIN'S NEW FOOD SCENE

The Fumbally café features communal tables and no head chef—just wonderful Irish home cooks making great sandwiches and soups.

CAR-FREE SIENA

Less flashy than Rome or Florence, always innovative Siena was first among Italian cities to ban cars from most of its old-town center.





SYMPHONY OF LIGHTS

This synchronized sound-and-light show illuminates buildings on both sides of Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour each night at 8 p.m.

MEXICO CITY SUBWAY TICKET

At many subway stations in Mexico's capital, do ten squats at a special machine and you'll get a free ticket to ride.

16 KENNEDY CENTER'S MILLENNIUM STAGE

Nightly at 6 p.m., this Washington, D.C., temple of culture hosts performers such as steel-pan drummers and dance groups.

17 "WEEKDAY WANDERLUST"

San Francisco's monthly travel-writer speaker series packs the Library Bar of the Hotel Rex with a collegial mix of trip tales and cocktails.

18 SLOW BOAT TO NANTUCKET

The best way to reach the all-American beach mecca in Massachusetts isn't the speedy hydrofoil from Hyannis but the slower ferry, which takes two-and-a-half stress-shedding hours.

19 COOLEST PASSPORT

Hikers on the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, in France and Spain, fill a paper Pilgrim's Record with inked stamps collected along the way at inns, churches, and tourist offices.

20 GET-UPS AND GO

Sustainable-minded Nau clothing is outdoor wear you can take from Brooklyn bar to base camp.

21

SPIFFIER ROME

The Pyramid, Colosseum, Trevi Fountain, and Domus Aurea (Emperor Nero's villa) all show off much needed and tasteful—touch-ups. Next: the Spanish Steps.

22

KING OF WINES

In Tokaj, Hungary, the sweet golden Tokaji aszú wine is once again top-notch and sought-after (Louis XIV dubbed it the "wine of kings").

23

THIS AMERICAN LIFE

Addictive podcasts of the weekly National Public Radio show will make any long-haul drive a delight.



24

GERMANY'S ASPARAGUS SEASON

Germans mark the April-June crops of *spargel* (white asparagus) with festivals and menus that serve the tasty stalks traditionally (with hollandaise sauce, new potatoes, and ham) or with a twist (in ice cream).

25

THE JOYS OF CAMPING

No need to go anywhere exotic. The simple freedom of being in a tent makes for a multisensory journey of its own: rain pattering on the roof, the view out the flap, the woodsy smoke of a campfire.

26

STINKY TOFU

Get your fix at the night markets in Richmond, British Columbia, where delectable Chinese specialties fill four blocks of neon-lit food stalls.

27

WAKE UP IN NEW MEXICO

D. H. Lawrence, writing in 1928, pretty much summed it up: "The moment I saw the brilliant, proud morning shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fe, something stood still in my soul."

28

CLIMBING HUAYNA PICCHU

That green Peruvian peak backdropping all those Machu Picchu photos allows only 400 hikers a day. Book early. The views are worth it.

29

A PROPER BRITISH FRY-UP

St. Werburghs City Farm, in Bristol, serves the classic breakfast of eggs, toast, beans, bangers, and grilled tomatoes in a Hobbiton-like cottage.

30

ICE BIKING BUFFALO

Pedal the Canalside ice rink on an ice bike with one wheel and one blade. It's all part of a waterfront revitalization in this upstate New York city.



BRIGHTER BAGS

Brands like Delsey, Trunkster, and ChicBuds are introducing suitcases and bags that can charge your phone, weigh and locate themselves, unlock with fingerprint ID, and even give weather forecasts.

36 EPIC SKI PASS

For about the price of seven daily lift tickets you get unlimited, all-season access to 11 ski resorts in California, Colorado, and Utah. Only hook? You've got to buy it before the season starts.

37

JOYRIDES WITH "JUCY"

Imported from New Zealand, these retrofitted Dodge Caravans are the more nimble, next-gen RVs, packed with double beds, fridge, and a stove.

38

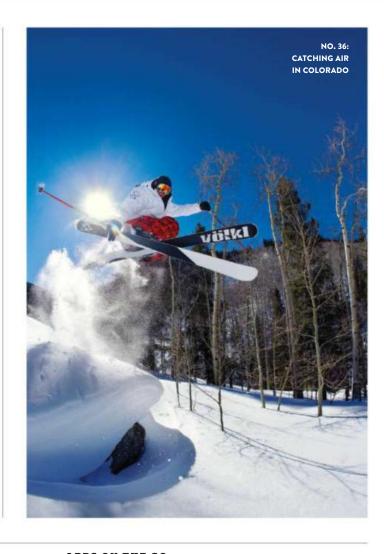
OMS AND SUDS

During weekly Bend & Brew classes, Asheville's Travelling Yogini leads sun salutation sessions at different breweries around the North Carolina mountain town, followed by beer tastings.

39

ART IN QATAR

Abu Dhabi may have the Louvre, but Doha boasts the I. M. Pei-designed Museum of Islamic Art, an Ali Baba's cavern of cherished objects.



APPS ON THE GO



HOPPER

Airline ticket search taking into account the best times of day to fly. Also alerts you to the right time to book



BIRDSEYE

Guide to the likely birds you'll see in any given area, with the ability to record and submit sightings quickly



JUST AHEAD

GPS-guided audio tour of national parks, with entertaining stories, geography, history, and driving directions



DUOLINGO

Gamelike language learning and an iconic owl mascot. Covers ten languages, including Irish and Turkish

44 REAL MEXICO

The revived colonial mining town Real de Catorce offers 17th-century churches and buildings (some converted into hotels and restaurants) and horse rides into peyote country.

45

MOTOR CITY MIDTOWN

Detroit's Midtown hood lures "eds and meds" from the nearby college and hospital with made-here watches and high-end bicycles (Shinola), quirky crafts (City Bird), and local beer (Motor City Brewing Works).

46 UNDERWATER GALLERY

Dive or snorkel into one of the world's only underwater sculpture parks in Grenada's Molinière Bay, where more than 60 eerily beautiful figures riff on local culture.

47 POSTCARDS

Whether from the edge or just from New Jersey, these cultural souvenirs have Instagram beat when it comes to tangible travel pleasures.

48

HIKE THE LYCIAN WAY

Passing sleepy villages, beekeepers making honey, and ancient tombs carved in the rocks above, this ancient off-the-radar Turkish trail skirts the Mediterranean.









SWEET MEETS SAVORY

Rich caramels at Nashville's Olive and Sinclair combine duck fat, cane sugar, and pepper. Watch them being crafted during the Tennessee company's factory tours.

58

BATHING IN MUD

Just outside Argentina's top wine region, the Termas Cacheuta resort overflows with both mud and mineral baths.

59

CARNIVAL FEVER

Before Ash Wednesday, the tiny island country of Trinidad essentially shuts down for one of the world's largest carnival celebrations. Line up for "fetting" (partying in the streets) and soca-fueled dancing.

60 SLEDDING FOR **GROWN-UPS**

"Sledging" down Swiss slopes on steerable sleds with runners is the latest Alpine craze. Try it in the cul-de-sac village of Arosa.

61

SOUND ON

Classical Hindustani music resonates throughout Varanasi, one of India's oldest cities.

REST LIKE ROYALTY

London's fourth-generation, family-owned Goring Hotel features not only a complete designer revamp but also a royal warrant from Queen Elizabeth II for hospitality services.



63

TRIBAL TEXTILES

In riverside Luang Prabang, Laos, watch skilled women weave, tie-dye, and batik fabric at the Ock Pop Tok workshop, then take a half-day crafting class.

64

BLISS OUT, **MOROCCAN STYLE**

With its orangeblossom-scented massages, Les Bains de Marrakech provides a luxurious respite from dusty streets and souks.

65

DANCING **DERVISHES**

Prepare to be moved by the sacred ceremony where Sufi monks whirl to mystical music at Karabaş-i Veli, a cultural heritage center in Bursa, Turkey.

66

PORTUGUESE FEAST

Celia Pedroso's humorfilled Eat Portugal tour leads visitors to Lisbon's greatest tastes, including the new Mercado da Ribeira.

67

OPAL COUNTRY

Visit gem mines, houses, and bars built underground in Coober Pedy, in northern South Australia, a quirky outpost celebrating its centennial this year.

CRUISES WE CRAVE



68 **NILE, EGYPT**

Pharaohs' tombs, palmskirted shores, and tales of Queen Hatshepsut, in a complex land



69 IRRAWADDY, MYANMAR

Temples, jungle-clad banks, rice paddies, and Intha fishermen who ply boat oars with one leg



70 RHINE, GERMANY

Ouaint castles and halftimbered towns along a hardworking European shipping lane



ANTARCTICA

Gentoo penguins and Weddell seals at the stark, unearthly end of the world



NORWAY FJORDS

Impossibly blue water, towering cliffs, and glacier and waterfall views in Frozen country

WHALES ON MAUI

From January to April, watch whales sans the expensive boat tours by parking yourself on the shores of the Au'Au Channel. The humpback hangout makes spotting easy.



74 ROOTSRATED.COM

Type in your outdoor activity of choice, and this nifty website shows where you can do it at your destination. Backpacking near Bozeman, anyone?

75

THE MET, TAMED

Jason Spiehler, co-founder of new guide service Walks of New York, brings the Metropolitan Museum of Art to life, breaking down the massive institution into compelling stories.

76

HOPPING GOOD

Blue Bunny Ice Cream's headquarters in Le Mars, Iowa, features a retro ice cream parlor scooping 70-plus flavors.

77

NATIONAL PARK YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

About 110 miles east of El Paso, the little-visited

Guadalupe Mountains park encompasses a rare alpine habitat with elk and mountain lions, a fossilized reef, and the highest mountain in Texas.

78

RAISE YOUR GLASS

Szimpla Kért started
Budapest's "ruin bar" trend
in Hungary when it opened
in 2002, and it remains
cool as ever with its good food
and beer in dilapidated
open-air courtyards.

79

FUN IN FUNICULARS

Reach the heady heights of Valparaiso, Chile, on one of the port city's click-clacking, hundred-year-old incline cable railways, or *ascensors*.

80

SURF PERU

Catch the longest left-hand waves in the world from Peru's northern coast, with its whitesand beaches and laid-back resorts. Find surf shops in Máncora and sleepy Punta Sal.





82

Book us a corner table at the growing number of American fine-dining spots, such as New York City's Dirt Candy and Pittsburgh's Bar Marco, where owners have abolished tips in favor of paying staff living wages.

83 SKY BIKE BUILT FOR TWO

At Mashpi Lodge, in Ecuador, ride a tandem "bike" suspended from a 656-footlong cable above the Andean cloud forest.

THE WHOLE ENCHILADA

Tacos get a lot of love in San Antonio, Texas, but there's nothing we'd rather eat than chicken enchiladas verde at El Mirador in Southtown.

85 **SUPER SONICS**

Snorkelers in the turquoise waters around Salt Cay, in Turks and Caicos, can hear the plaintive songs of thousands of humpback whales from January to April.

LET THEM EAT **BLACK FOREST CAKE**

Lots of places in Germany serve up this decadent dessert, but Hotel Alemannenhof's version comes with a sweet terrace view of the Black Forest's famed Lake Titisee.

UNDERGROUND GALLERY

The Swedish capital Stockholm's subway system amounts to the world's longest art exhibit (68 miles), with works installed throughout.

88

RICHARD III'S NEW GRAVE

The mortal remains of the infamous English king were recently reinterred at Leicester Cathedral.

89

OOMPAH LOOMPAH

Hotel Chocolat's Rabot Estate. in St. Lucia, is part lodging,



part tropical Wonka factory, with a chocolate-themed restaurant and tree-to-bar candymaking experiences.

90

CANADA'S ELLIS ISLAND

Genealogy buffs have a field day at the newly expanded Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, in popular port of call Halifax.

NORTH AFRICAN HEAT

Harissa, a sinus-clearing paste of red peppers and spices, originated in Tunisia. Add it to bread, soup—or anything, really.

92

PREDAWN TUK TUK

In Cambodia, buzz down

the streets of Siem Reap in complete darkness riding in an auto rickshaw, before landing at Angkor Wat for sunrise over the temples.

93

HOMING IN ON ART

In red-hot Manchester, the new HOME-England's largest contemporary arts center outside of Londonhosts experimental theater, films, and edgy exhibits.

94

LITTLE LIBRARIES

A shelf or two of books await readers at take-one, leaveone Little Free Libraries throughout the world. A trail of them between Savannah and Milledgeville, Georgia, honors Flannery O'Connor.

95

OYSTERS IN CANCALE

Europe's highest tides nurture the mollusks in this French port town. Slurp them down along Cancale's crescentshaped waterfront.

96

HIPSTER JOBURG

Maboneng Precinct, in Johannesburg, South Africa, fills converted warehouses and onetime factories with galleries, cafés, and the best people-watching in town.

A BEEF WITH BANGKOK

In Thailand, most restaurants ask if you want food Thai or farang (tourist) spicy. Not so Nahm, where its legendary beef salad is served only one way: incendiary.

98

THE CHEESE STANDS ALONE

Throughout Switzerland, and particularly in Alpine areas like Canton Uri, farmers set their cheese out on tables to buy on an honor system.

WATER THAT GLOWS

In Mosquito Bay in Viegues. Puerto Rico, nighttime kayak trips glide through glittering water at the world's brightest bioluminescent bay.

100

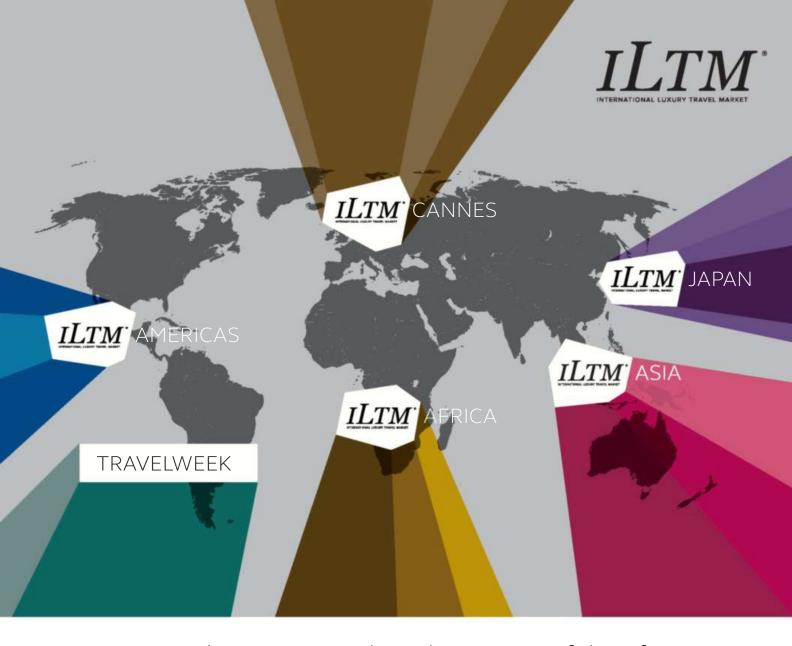
QUINTESSENTIAL JAPANESE TEAHOUSE

Near Kyoto's Kodaiji Temple, sit and sip at ultratraditional Rakusho, with its garden, lanterns, and pond of koi fish.

101

GETTING OFF THE GRID

And being wholly in the now.



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husband, our three kids, and I are 45 minutes into a bumpy ride along a dusty, winding road on the Nicova Peninsula of

Costa Rica when I flash back four months. Sitting pretty on a groomed beach on Long Island, my husband, Manny, and I were talking about—well, what does anyone talk about at the end of one vacation but the planning for the next? Tired of spending a fortune on the same conventional family trips everyone else we knew was taking, Manny vowed the next one would be different. We would travel to an unfamiliar place to live like locals, or as close to locals as we could get. Which is how we find ourselves en route to the small seaside settlement called Mal Pais—"bad country," a name derived from the area's steep, rugged terrain, not suitable for farming.

Or so the story went.

"This can't be the restaurant," says my 11-year-old son as my husband turns our rental jeep onto a sand parking lot. "It looks like a dog run."

On the far side of a rope, dozens of dogs are running free around a few haphazardly placed plastic tables. Don't be so narrow-minded, I want to scold him. Only I'm thinking the same thing. Could this really be Banana Beach, the lunch place recommended by Bruno Demarco Quiroz, the young Argentine manager of Hotel Moana, where we're staying? Then a couple of beers go by on a tray, and my husband all but jumps from the car, commanding us to follow.

There is not enough shade at our table, the food is slow in coming, the kids' milk is served warm. But rather than complain, my children peel off one by one to gape at the same thing Manny and I, veteran island visitors, can't help but stare at: the enormous, savage beauty of the unspoiled jungle beach.

Usually when we travel, we have to stick the children in some pricey day camp to grab even five minutes alone. Here there's nary a counselor, ball, or sand bucket in sight. All that's left is what's around us—and our kids become more absorbed in an exploration of this new world than they've been anywhere else.

Surfing instructors (right) approach Playa Hermosa, or "beautiful beach," known for its uncrowded, palm-fringed expanse of sand. Seaside slumber: A beachgoer (left, top) hangs ten in a hammock. Coconuts (left, bottom) offer cool refreshment on hot afternoons.











This means Manny and I are free. Soon we notice we are the only Americans here; the people around us are speaking Spanish, French, German. No one seems to be talking about the stock market, real estate, or the best after-school sports programs. If they are, we can't understand them.

We haven't come to Mal Pais expressly to see wildlife; for that we'd visit Manuel Antonio National Park or some of Costa Rica's many other reserves. Yet by staying at the small Hotel Moana, we now live in close proximity to the natural world, a fact underscored early the following morning when we're awakened by the very loud calls of red-furred howler monkeys. At breakfast, on the lodge's vertiginously cantilevered dining pavilion—featuring, perhaps too literally, drop-dead views of the swirling ocean below—we spy iguanas in the treetops. Vultures circle in the distance.

"So you like Tico style," Quiroz observes. Tico? "Native Costa Rican. You know, laid back, *pura vida*, live and let live." We all nod, and, assured, he gives us his next recommendation: a surfing school at Playa Hermosa, or Beautiful Beach.

To

GET TO BEAUTIFUL BEACH, we first must drive through Santa Teresa, a small, hectic town that is crammed with surfboard and sunglass shops in a swirling cloud of dust. People buzz around on mopeds and ATVs, nearly

all wearing bandanas over their faces. We drive by a French bakery and an open-air chicken restaurant, where we see whole chickens being cooked on a grill on the ground only a few feet from our passing tires.

The Shaka Surf School is just off the road, but we miss it because it looks like little more than an encampment. Pulling up to it, I find myself wondering about the safety protocols of this "school." But before I can mortify Manny by questioning a staff member, he quickly, perhaps preemptively, hires Brent Newell, a 23-year-old blond transplant from Cocoa Beach, Florida, to coach him and our oldest son.

"Yup, that be the town from *I Dream of Jeannie*," says Newell. True to the spirit of the long-running TV show, he all but makes us disappear by steering us to a through-the-jungle shortcut that he assures us will lead to the beach. Or not.

The path quickly turns into a river of mud. With my husband

and 11-year-old off on their lesson with Newell, I'm left to slip-slide along it with no assistance, one younger child hiked up on each hip. Together the three of us pass under a canopy of giant trees bedecked with dozens of mud clumps: termite colonies, a fact I keep to myself. Little brown spider monkeys up in the branches rain nuts down to the ground. Kerplunk! Kerplunk! Then we see it, a beach even bigger, more wild, and more beautiful than the one we visited yesterday, the only commerce on it two men selling coconut water out of the husk.

READ IT,

For more information on Mal Pais and Santa Teresa, visit www.malpais.net and nicoyapeninsula.com /malpais. For more information on Hotel Moana, visit moanacostarica.com. For more information on the Shaka Surf School, visit www .shakacostarica.com.



Beachy keen: Sunsets draw visitors and locals alike (above) to the soft sand of Playa Carmen. Howler monkeys (opposite, top), native only to Latin America, enjoy air rights at Hotel Moana (opposite, bottom), a small resort tucked into the jungle-blanketed hills of Mal Pais.

By now the kids are getting hungry, so I ask Newell for suggestions. "Koji's," he answers. "Awesome sushi. And don't worry about having the right clothes," he adds, reading my mind. "This," he points to his bare chest and board shorts, "is dressed for Costa Rica."

We descend on Koji's—a roadside eatery near Playa Hermosa—in our beach cover-ups and flipflops. The food is amazing and the crowd casual,

in a St. Barth's-beautiful-people sort of way. Still, the vibe is decidedly Tico, with friendly dogs roaming between our tables.

And so begins the routine of our two-week trip, although really it'll be the opposite of routine: We'll try something new each day. We will hike, or try to hike, waterfalls near the neighboring town of Montezuma, for which my cautious husband will wear sneakers, unlike the barefoot Ticos. This will cause him to slip and bang his leg, prematurely adjourning our excursion to a beachfront Italian restaurant, Playa de los Artistas, where we will enjoy perhaps the best, and most artfully arranged, meal we've ever had. We'll ride horses Tico style—helmetless with a 16-year-old guide named Josué, who, as he leads us



through a campground, will warn, "There will be some dogs, do not act scared," just as a ragtag pack of, oh, 20 or so fierce hounds charge at us and our horses.

Hundreds of ants will invade our room back at the lodge, and one night our air conditioning will not simply break but have a breakdown, spewing balls of hail in our faces. Yet everything will be fixed, and anyway, none of these setbacks

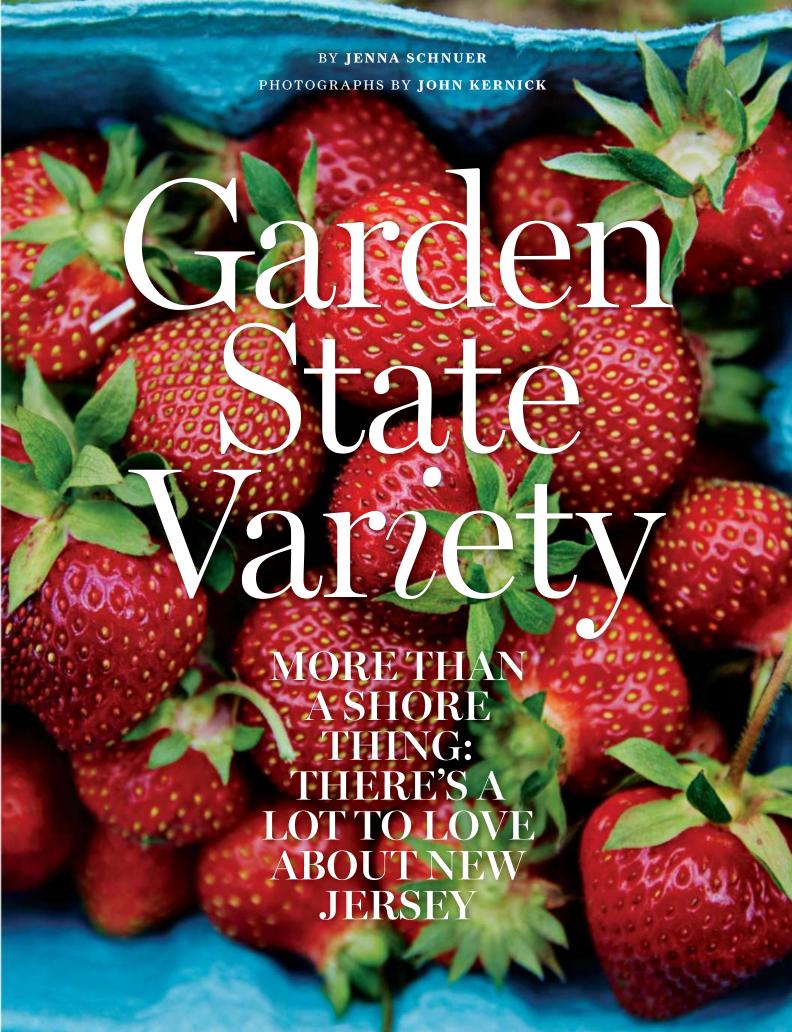
will matter. We will lose track of time, forget what day of the week it is, and, near the end of our stay, discover a beach with tidal pools where hundreds of snails cling to the primordial rock. Our children will play here for hours, splashing among the hermit crabs, starfish, and other sea creatures.

"It's like SeaWorld," I tell them.

"No," my 11-year-old will correct me, "it's the real one."

Journalist and fiction writer JOHANNA BERKMAN covers family life on her eponymous blog. Photographer and former Traveler photo editor KRISTA ROSSOW returned from this assignment with a new appreciation for howler monkeys.





WE'RE TREATING

kayaks like floating La-Z-Boy recliners, the three of us leaning back, legs stretched out on the decks. Here on the Delaware River, New Jersey lies to our left, Pennsylvania to our right. It's been several minutes since

we've needed to paddle. As Interstate 80 comes into view, we dip our paddles into the water to guide our boats around one of the thick concrete pillars of the highway overpass, the noise of cars rushing overhead crowding out the river sounds. "It's all right here," says my friend Leslie.

Indeed. That is the best and worst of New Jersey summed up. With 39,000 miles of public roadway paving the 8,723-square-mile state, it's easy to get to everything and, it can seem, hard to get away from anything. Though the Garden State ranks 46th by size, it is No. 11 in population. It bests Wyoming's resident count 15 to 1.

My family moved from Brooklyn to suburban Jersey in 1972, just shy of my second birthday. Still, New York City ran three generations deep, and my heart remained across the George Washington Bridge. I rolled my eyes whenever Bruce Springsteen came on the radio. Going "down the shore" was my only consolation prize. Beyond that, Jersey was a punch line and a place to leave. In college, any kid who dared ask of me "what exit?" got a snide smile in return.

As an adult, though, I started to soften my stance. During a stay at my parents' house, a Web search turned up hiking trails at the Tenafly Nature Center, only ten minutes away. There I discovered trails lined with oak trees, hickories, and some experimental American chestnut seedlings; signs warning of bear activity; and a place out of eyeshot of local

bear activity; and a place out of eyeshot of local roads. Was the joke on me all along?

AFTER AN EIGHT-MILE FLOAT, we pull the kayaks out of the water near the Kittatinny Point Visitor Center in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Families crowd the beach. Kids in the river blast each other with water cannons and beach balls. Spanish-language pop music blares from huge speakers.

Earlier in the day, the parking lot had been jammed tighter than a mall the day before Christmas, so a park ranger had recommended area. In sand-covered flip-flops, Leslie and I squish off along the shoulder of the highway to get my hatchback. Every car in the construction area wears a parking ticket. This is Jersey-style tough love. Even a lazy float comes at a price.

The BBQs and laughter from the river continue at full

parking across I-80 in what was, it turned out, a construction

The BBQs and laughter from the river continue at full strength to our right. My friends head home, and I drive four miles up Old Mine Road, trees thick on either side of the road that's at times barely paved. At my campsite in Worthington State Forest, I'm suddenly immersed in a quieter New Jersey, the only human sounds coming from two campsites away and the late afternoon kayakers drifting by on the water below.

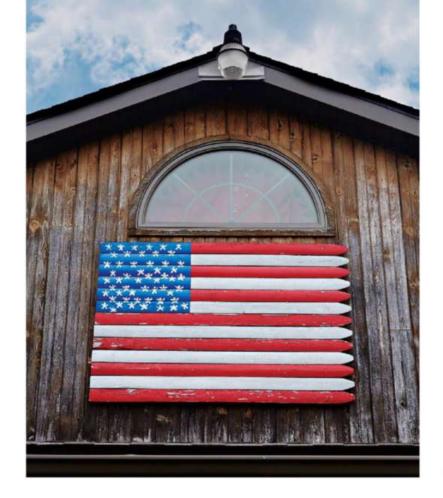
It amuses me to see my leaf green tent, where I've spent so many nights, set up here. Camping doesn't mesh with the Jersey I grew up in: the malls, beach houses, highways, and 16-plex movie theaters. It's hard to push away the thought of all those houses and people in nearby towns.

Relaxing back into my chair by the campfire, I look up at the night sky. Here, 74 miles from New York City's light pollution, the stars poke through the darkness. Bullfrogs provide the evening's sound track and, later, the light of my headlamp catches the evening's final entertainment—tiny frogs hopping around, no bigger than my thumbnail. Camping in New Jersey starts to make sense.

By morning, the sky serves up a punishing gray. I consider abandoning my plan to drive to High Point State Park in northwest New Jersey, an hour away. The park's website promises a view of farmlands and forest for miles and miles from the overlook, the state's highest point at 1,803 feet above sea level. The dreary weather gives no such guarantee. Anxiety sets in, as if this experiment of mine can't possibly go right.

Thirty miles from Worthington, on State Highway 94, the landscape opens up to fields, houses here and there, a baseball diamond in the distance. There's room to breathe. I'm moving

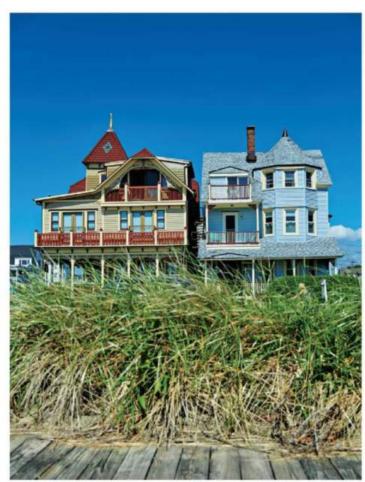
Out to pasture
(opposite): New
Jersey's country
roads (bottom) often
lead past fields of
grazing animals to
fruit stands such as
Best's in Hackettstown
(top right). Nearby
Donaldson Farms is
popular for its you-pick
fields and all-American
charm (top left).















along steadily when, finally, the stream of farm stands proves too difficult to resist, and I stop at Lentini's. The baskets around the stand overflow with local corn and tomatoes. After choosing several ears of early season corn, I step up to the counter to pay. Pints of sour cherries, their skins verging on a translucent red, catch my eye. I try one, and the sour makes me wince.

The teen girl behind the counter quickly schools me, gently suggesting that my eye twitch is the stuff of beginners. "I don't think they're sour enough," she says. She likes a full face-puckering sour, but she also offers one regular customer's advice: Roll them in sugar and freeze them.

My passenger seat piled with produce, I drive on. By the time I get to High Point, my steering wheel is sticky with cherry juice. I park in the lot and make the short walk up the road to High Point Monument, a 220-foot obelisk that honors war veterans. There's no use trying to see past the day's fog out to the Pocono Mountains or the Wallkill River Valley. Instead I focus on some bright pink wildflowers. After yesterday's heat, the rain-day air comforts me. I get to my car just as it starts to pour.

Back at the campsite that evening, the rain starts again minutes after I set the corn onto the campfire grate. Though the husks are barely warmed, I rip them off and eat the corn raw. The kernels taste as sweet as the cherries were tart: a main course and dessert all in one.

THE NEXT MORNING, on Route 46 in the hamlet of Delaware, a bright red building adorned with white letters announcing "Marshall's Country Store" looks like a promising place to ask for a breakfast recommendation. The cashier hems and haws over my question, but the woman behind me steps up with a resolute "Uncle Buck's in Belvidere." Ignoring that kind of confidence would be foolish.

Upon settling into a booth at the Original Uncle Buck's Diner, I look over the breakfast menu, deciding to skip the scrapple in favor of the "famous" sausage burger. The restaurant, with its beige and darker beige checkerboard floor and green stools and booths, seems down to earth, making me think there must be something behind the boast.

I'm surprised to hear a familiar voice saying, "I see you found it." It's the woman who recommended the place, Nancy Leeds. We jaw about New Jersey. She is fiercely loyal to the state—and, more so, this northwestern corner. "Everybody thinks Newark, Elizabeth, the refineries," Leeds says. "They don't get to see the beautiful part of New Jersey. And it's here. It's here."

The breakfast defeats me. My guess: It's famous locally as much for its size and calorie count as for its flavor. "You tapping out?" asks the waitress. Though my old favorite, the Jersey Shore, is waiting, I'm sorry to leave. These towns neighboring the Delaware River have grown on me. I wend my way slowly toward Route 31 and the drive south. Along the way, the names of passing roads hint at the area's history: Greenwich Street, Oxford Street, Brass Castle Road.

After several stops on Route 31—including a spur-of-themoment paddle on a reservoir—a familiar bridge welcomes me to the Garden State Parkway, one of Jersey's main speedways.

The Driscoll Bridge spans the Raritan River and, at its peak, points the car's nose just skyward enough to simulate driving into the clouds.

On this July Tuesday, I luck out. Cars move along, unsnarled by summer beach traffic. Blue skies accented by fluffy clouds tempt me to drive barefoot.

A few hours later, I check into the Hotel Tides in Asbury Park. I slip on flip-flops and walk down to the boardwalk.

The unexpected sounds of drums and tambourines hit my ears, getting louder with every step. It doesn't take long to find the source: Congo Square North, a weekly music gathering of the town's finest hippies, misfits, and parents with toddlers.

A vibrant elderly woman, dressed in a kente cloth tunic, her hair braided through with fabric, holds court from her electric wheelchair. As people orbit around her, nearly everybody stops to say hello. She plays the role of hostess to all—the kids who race through, the tattooed woman cradling a ferret, and, yes, me. I ask how long she's lived in Asbury Park. "My whole life," she replies. "I was a dancer." And, with that, she stands up

Shore bets (opposite,

clockwise from top

right): Jersey resort pleasures are as

timeless as the colorful

Victorian houses

around Asbury Park-

whether watching the

sun set over sand in Cape May, digging into

a basket of steamed

shrimp at H&H

Seafood, or pulling

up a stool to a classic

video arcade game

at the retro Silverball

Museum Arcade.

from her wheelchair and moves to the drumbeats.

I could stay and watch her all night, but I'm craving a touch of my Jersey Shore childhood, an arcade. It's after 5 p.m., so \$15 at the Silverball Museum Arcade buys unlimited play on 80 years of pinball history. My old pal, the KISS-themed machine, doesn't hold up to memory, but I still can't resist Galaga, my favorite video game from the 1980s. The next 40 minutes disappear into a haze of spaceship shoot-'em-up. Earning ninth and tenth spots on the machine's high-score list feels more rewarding than it's sane to admit.

After the arcade's bells and whistles, the boardwalk is steeped in quiet. Just some women laughing. I look down from the boardwalk to see a crab slowly sidestepping along the beach.

One final stop. At long last, it's time to forgive my parents for our decades-ago move to Jersey. I drive south—as far south as Jersey goes-to Cape May Point, where my mom meets me at my beach house rental.

Sitting at a picnic table on the deck of H&H Seafood, the basin in front of us loaded with crabs, I'm rambling on and on about the past days. About the sour cherries and the diners and a storm that soaked me while I was kayaking on a quiet reservoir the day before. My brain is in a New Jersey whirlwind. This change—my new, true love of the place—shocks both my mom and me.

The next evening, my fingers still smarting from crab shell cuts, I go for a bike ride to the Cape May Lighthouse. I pedal past a vineyard, green grapes starting to hang heavy from the vines; a closed roadside stand that promises the owners will be back in the morning with fresh-baked bread; and a white horse, its mane looking like an old man's comb-over.

I think back on the past five days. What exit? The whole lot of them. It's all right here.

JENNA SCHNUER lives in Alaska and previously wrote for Traveler about driving in the Dakotas. JOHN KERNICK photographed Seville, Spain, for a February/March 2015 feature.

A TOP-TO-BOTTOM drive of New Jersey shows off the compact state's big personality and diverse outdoor experiences—from farm stands to wineries, beaches to hiking trails. Camping trips and shore escapes are a natural fit for long weekends.

WHERE TO STAY

The Wooden Duck Bed & Breakfast sits 24 miles east of the Delaware Water Gap visitors center. On a ten-acre estate, the grounds feature rolling hills that plenty of deer call home. Keep your camera close at hand. From \$139.

On the Jersey Shore, Asbury Park's **Hotel** Tides welcomes guests with rotating art exhibits in the lobby and rain showerheads (especially refreshing after a day on the beach). The hotel's pool is open to the public for \$5 a day and doubles as a gathering spot, while the small spa provides respite. From \$120.

Numerous B&Bs occupy Cape May's historic homes. The colonial-style **Eldredge** House offers a rarity for the area: single-night bookings during the summer high season. The owner also gives out gift certificates good at several area breakfast spots. From \$135.

WHERE TO EAT

Don't dare leaving New Iersev without eating at a diner-they're the stuff of late-night legends for those who grew up here. Jersey diners range from classic silver-sided stand-alones to places far quirkier, such as the **Double S Diner**. First opened in 1955,

NEW YORK • Wantage High Point Gap N.R.A. Kittatinny Valley State Park Worthington
Delaware State Forest Hackettstown New York 78 GOV. DRISCOLL BRIDGE PENNSYLVANIA Trenton Asbury Park NEW Philadelphia. **JERSEY** Seaside Heights Somerdale Chatsworth Wharton State Forest **ATLANTIC OCEAN** Atlantic City DELAWARE MARYLAND Dover Cape May Point 0 km Cape May

this spot in Wantage off Route 23 reopened in the fall of 2012 after a fire that gutted the place. Walk through the door-and the Elvis paraphernalia-filled vestibule—and quickly become part of the

family. Waitress Betty Varley recommends the corned beef hash. They also do a fine BBQ.

Housed in Cape May Point's old general store, the **Red Store** warrants repeat visits for chef and owner Lucas Manteca's menu starring locally sourced ingredients. The food's good enough to dress up for, but nobody will mind if you come in flip-flops.

WHAT TO WATCH

New Jersey's signature TV show, The Sopranos, took viewers on a tour of the state—from Tony Soprano's house in North Caldwell to Holsten's, a real Bloomfield restaurant that provided the backdrop for the series's famous final scene.

New York Trenton Philadelphia

ATLANTIC OCEAN

MD

Stav in your car at New Jersey gas stations; it's the only state that completely bans self-service fuel pumps (though state lawmakers have recently taken up the debate).

Each October, Chatsworth celebrates cranberries—a Jersey staple since the late 19th century—at a festival centered on the historic White Horse Inn.

New Jersey claims to have hosted the first organized game of baseball, in 1845, as well as pro basketball's official tip-off, in 1896.

LOCAL FLAVOR

TTITUDE ON TAP

Love for Jersey steers Flying Fish brewery's Exit Series, boasting the tagline "Proudly brewed in New Jersey. You got a problem with that?" The Somerdale-based brewery named the nine beers in its series for exits on the New Jersey Turnpike while flavoring each with the personality of the area. Exit 3 is a honey ale brewed with one of the state's most beloved crops: blueberries. Exit 1? Bayshore Oyster Stout, a fine drink pairing with its namesake seafood.



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BY EMILY AINSWORTH

An anthropologist, photographer, and National Geographic young explorer, Emily Ainsworth is a native of Oxford, England. "The city is a place of idiosyncratic charm where bells chime off hours and ancient alleyways lead to nowhere," says Ainsworth. Here she shares her favorite things to do in the City of Dreaming Spires.

The first place I take visitors is...

The Turf Tavern, a 13th-century pub hidden amid a maze of alleys. On chilly nights, warm yourself in front of the lit braziers in the courtyard; marshmallows and toasting forks are available at the bar.

You can tell if someone is from my city if...

They're wearing Wellington boots (top) and talking enthusiastically about Aristotle.

For the best view of my city...

Head to the top of St. Mary's church tower. The medieval spiral staircase, with its 127 steps, comes with a health warning, but the panoramic views are worth it.

The dish that best represents my city is...

Sausage (bangers) and mash, and real ale is our signature drink.

My city's best museum is...

The Pitt Rivers Museum for its artifacts from around the world. Don't miss the shrunken heads and the witch that's supposedly trapped in a bottle on display.

Bet you didn't know...

Oxford claims to be home to the oldest ham in the world; it hangs proudly in the window of the M. Feller and Sons butchers stall in the Covered Market (a good place to buy authentic souvenirs).

Locals know to skip...

The chain stores and crowds of Cornmarket Street; check out the independent shops in Jericho instead.

This could only happen in my city...

"Trashing"—when university students leaving their exams are ritually showered with champagne, fish guts, and trifle.

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